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OPINION METER

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If the election were held today, who would you vote for governor?

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WORLD



Vladimir Putin talks tough but cools tensions in the Ukraine.

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Edgar Martirosyan will surely never forget the pizza delivery he made to the Oscars.

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SAT-10, SBA tests abolished in public schools. PAGE 5

ADMINISTRATION: NO GUARANTEE GOVERNOR WILL SIGN BILL

'Flaws in Saipan casino bill, chilling effect on other biz'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A closer look at the 34-page Saipan casino gaming bill that the Legislature passed in two days shows what some officials describe as flaws and chilling effects on other businesses, including the potential to lose more income than the government can generate, stall video lottery and electronic gaming, phase out the poker industry on three islands, and allow up to 80 years of "exclusive" casino operation with a uniform \$15 million a year fee, among other things.

» **Hong Kong investor's plans mirror casino measure**

At the same time, some of the casino bill's provisions mirror that of the plans of a Hong Kong-based investor that earlier told Gov. Eloy S. Inos and "at least" four lawmakers on separate occasions about their "close to \$3 billion" in planned total investments in the CNMI inclusive of hotels, villas, and a private medical center over a certain period of time, along with "between 1,000 and 2,000 hotel rooms."

House Bill 18-179, House Draft 4, now on its way to the governor for action, requires a minimum of \$2 billion investment in the CNMI inclusive of the

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As Gonno couple's two children, parents arrive

» **Family members not allowed to see bodies**

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The parents and the two children of a Chinese couple who were found dead inside their charred house in As Gonno last Feb. 23 arrived on Saipan from China early yesterday morning. They expressed disappointment and sorrow at not being allowed to see the bodies 10 days after the incident.

Jin Chuan Zhuang and Lan Zhi Guan, parents of female victim Qing Xiu Zheng, and Jin Kai Hu, father of male victim Guo Huang Xu, arrived on Saipan with the victims' children, Xing Peng Xu, 13, and Li Lian Xu, 5, at 1:30am.

The group was met at the airport by the brother and sister of victim Qing Xiu Zheng, and a Chinese volunteer for the

See AS GONNO on Page 4

Russia unlikely to pull back in Crimea—analysts

By JULIE PACE
AP WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT

WASHINGTON (AP)—Russia is unlikely to pull back its military forces in Ukraine's Crimean peninsula, analysts and former Obama administration officials say, forcing the United States and Europe into a more limited strategy of trying



Obama

to prevent President Vladimir Putin from making advances elsewhere in the former Soviet republic.

It's an unsettling scenario for
See RUSSIA on Page 4



FOR A TRAFFIC SIGNAL SYSTEM

GPPC Inc. employees work on a traffic signal system and related construction projects near the intersection of Beach Road and Tun Segundo Road in Chalan Kanoa. The government awarded an almost \$950,000 contract to GPPC Inc. for the traffic signal system project that also involves widening of the intersection, installation of pavement markers and signs, pedestrian crosswalks, sidewalks, curb and gutter, enhancement of landscape, and improvement of drainage system or infiltrator.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



PICKS OF THE WEEK



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Local

NMC wants to raise wages to 85 pct. of peer institutions

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Based on the budget it proposes for the next fiscal year, the Northern Marianas College wants to raise the wages of all its employees, including its president, to 85 percent of the average salaries of peer institutions.

The Board of Regents agreed yesterday to endorse the salary hikes in the proposed \$7.9 million budget the college will submit to Gov. Eloy S. Inos.

Based on the college's analysis, the wage increase will cost some \$886,000, of which

\$200,000 will go to faculty members.

The budget proposal for fiscal year 2015 is \$3.1 million more than what NMC is currently getting. NMC's budget for fiscal year 2014 totaled \$4.6 million. Its original proposal was \$6.3 million.

Saipan Tribune learned that NMC's proposal for fiscal year 2015 is similar to what it originally asked for in fiscal year 2013, when only \$5.2 million was actually

approved by the Legislature.

Based on budget documents issued yesterday, NMC proposes to increase its number of employees from the current 117 to 136 next fiscal year, which mean 19 added posts.

Of the \$7.9 million proposal, personnel costs will get the bulk at \$7.1 million. Of that amount \$886,000 will be used to adjust the salaries of all employees.

The college is also seeking

\$671,452 for utilities while \$78,583 will pay for the mandated 1-percent share of the Office of the Public Auditor.

'Where is NMC among its peers?'

Human resource director and legal counsel Christopher Timmons disclosed yesterday that certain employees at NMC are at 50 percent of the average salary of their peer institutions while others are at 85 percent.

As an example, he cited some employees at the NMC finance department who currently earn way below—about at 40 percent—the average salary that

their counterparts are receiving in peer institutions.

Timmons said that all of the college's 117 personnel will be covered by the salary adjustments once funding is officially identified and certified by the board.

As for NMC employees who are already earning at 85 percent or above the average salary of peer institutions, college president Dr. Sharon Y. Hart made one thing clear: "We are not going to lower anyone, but we're not raising those who are already earning at 85 percent or above."

For example, if a dean is found earning \$52,000 per annum at NMC and 85 percent of the average salary for the same position at peer institutions is at \$57,000 per year, the dean will see an increase of \$5,000.

"We look at every single position in the college. We have some employees who are earning above [the target 85 percent average], but we have a lot of folks who are way below the average," said Hart.

She said a number of employees may receive larger adjustments because they've been with the college for so long, yet earn a salary way below their peers institutions.

What if budget is rejected?

In the event the proposed budget for NMC is not approved, Hart said that NMC remains firm in its goal to implement the salary adjustments, even if it takes revising the "target percentage."

"If the Legislature, for example, only gives us \$350,000 for the salary increase...the amount will not be divided among all our employees. Instead...we will go back to the board and see if we can lower the target 85 percent to maybe 75 percent [of the average salary of peer institutions]," she explained.

Hart pointed out that among the reasons why the college's accreditation was put at risk is the concern about "administrative capacity."

"We're becoming a revolving door where people are coming in and people are going out. The commission was very clear to us: You have to have a strong administrative base at NMC," said Hart, adding that the salary adjustment plan presented to the commission helped the college reaffirm its accreditation.

The college's proposed budget is also strategically focused around the College Completion Agenda, where there are national college degree attainment goals, which is leading states to set new policies and practices, according to Hart.

If You Purchased Municipal Derivative Transactions from January 1, 1992 to August 18, 2011

You Could Get a Payment for a Class Action Settlement.

A proposed Settlement has been reached with Bank of America, N.A. ("Bank of America"), in a class action lawsuit that alleges price-fixing in the sale of municipal derivatives transactions by Bank of America and other companies. The case, *In re Municipal Derivatives Antitrust Litigation*, MDL No. 1950, No. 08-02516, is pending in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York.

Who Is Included in the Settlement?

This Settlement includes all state, local and municipal government entities, independent government agencies, quasi-government, non-profit and private entities that purchased:

- (1) Municipal derivative transactions through negotiation, competitive bidding or auction, from any Alleged Provider Defendant or Co-Conspirator or brokered by any Alleged Broker Defendant or Co-Conspirator,
- (2) Any time from January 1, 1992 through August 18, 2011 in the United States and its territories or for delivery in the United States and its territories.

The Defendants and Co-Conspirators are listed in the detailed notice available on the Settlement website.

What Does the Settlement Provide?

Bank of America agreed to a settlement amount of \$20 million (plus any funds remaining in the State AG Escrow Fund that, as of the date this Notice is issued, Bank of America has access to pursuant to the terms of the State AG Settlement – this potential additional amount could be between \$0 and \$1 million) to be paid as follows: \$10 million has already been paid into an escrow account and the balance will be paid later. This Settlement is only a partial settlement of the lawsuit because it only affects the claims against Bank of America. The lawsuit is continuing against other Defendants. Morgan Stanley, Wachovia/Wells Fargo, and JPMorgan have already settled. Bank of America will provide reasonable cooperation, including discovery cooperation, to Class Plaintiffs' Counsel in the litigation that will continue against the other Defendants.

What Do I Do Now?

- **Remain in the Settlement.** To remain in the Settlement Class and participate in the Settlement, you do not have to do anything now. If the Court approves the Settlement, you give up the right to sue Bank of America for the claims and issues in this case. The Settlement Agreement, specifically Paragraph 1(cc), which is available at www.MunicipalDerivativesSettlement.com, describes in more detail the legal claims that you give up if you stay in the Class. If you remain in the Settlement Class, you still have the right to exclude yourself from any other settlements with other defendants reached in this lawsuit. Claim forms are not available now. Register on

the Settlement website to receive a claim form when it becomes available.

- **Exclude yourself from the Settlement.** If you do not want to remain in the Settlement Class, you must exclude yourself. You must send a written request for exclusion by first-class mail, **postmarked no later than May 6, 2014** to the Settlement Administrator. The detailed notice available on the Settlement website describes the information you are required to include in your request for exclusion. If you exclude yourself, you cannot participate in the Settlement, but you retain your right to sue Bank of America on your own for the claims in this lawsuit.

NOTE: You may receive similar notices regarding proposed settlements with other Defendants (i.e., GE Funding Capital Market Services, Inc., Trinity Funding Co., LLC and Trinity Plus Funding Co., LLC). However, if you wish to exclude yourself from the Bank of America settlement, you **must** send a separate and specific notice with regard to the Bank of America settlement.

- **Object or Comment on the Settlement.** If you remain in the Settlement Class and want to object to or comment on the Bank of America Settlement or any part of it, you must file an objection with the Court and deliver a copy to Class Counsel and Bank of America **no later than May 6, 2014**.

When Will the Court Decide Whether to Approve the Settlement?

The Court has scheduled a hearing on June 6, 2014, at 10 a.m. at the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, United States Courthouse, 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY 10007, to consider whether to finally approve the Bank of America Settlement as fair, reasonable and adequate, whether to approve Class Counsel's request for reimbursement of litigation expenses, and to consider any objections.

The Court has appointed the law firms of Hausfeld LLP; Boies, Schiller & Flexner LLP; and Susman Godfrey L.L.P. to serve as Class Counsel and represent all Class Members. If you want to be represented by your own lawyer, you may hire one at your own expense. You or your lawyer may ask to appear and speak at the hearing but are not required to. If you want to be heard by the Court, you must file a written notice of your intention to appear with the Court and deliver a copy to the Class Counsel and Bank of America **no later than May 6, 2014**. The Court may change the time and date of the hearing. Any change will be posted on the Settlement website.

Get More Information

For more information on this lawsuit, your rights, or to obtain a list of defendants, call or visit the Settlement website listed below or write to Municipal Derivatives Settlement, c/o Rust Consulting, Inc., P.O. Box 2500, Faribault, MN 55021-9500.

Quichocho is grilled on baby wipes allegedly found in car

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Lawyer Ramon K. Quichocho again took the witness stand yesterday and was grilled by the prosecution on, among other issues, baby wipes with bloodstains that Quichocho's wife allegedly found inside their car.

Answering attorney Colin Thompson's questions during cross-examination, Quichocho denied that he had sex or romantic relations with businesswoman Jung Ja Kim. He also denied flirting with Kim, who according to him, he then considered a sister.

Quichocho reiterated his testimony Tuesday that it was his wife, Frances—using his password in his email account and cell phone—who was behind the numerous chats and text messages with Kim.

Thompson cited Kim's testimony that Quichocho picked her up at the airport on Dec. 30, 2008, and they later had sex inside his car in the parking lot of Aquarius Beach Tower Hotel in Chalan Kanoa. Quichocho denied this.

He said he could not recall having chats with Frances the following day.

Thompson then showed in court copies of an exchange of chats in which Frances confronted Quichocho about find-

ing bloodstained baby wipes in their car. Quichocho admitted it was his and Frances' chats.

Quichocho also admitted that in the chats, Frances accused him of having an affair and having sex with someone in the car.

Quichocho, however, denied knowing about the baby wipes and reiterated that he did not have sex with Kim in the car.

In reading Frances' chat messages, Thompson quoted Frances as telling Quichocho that she was not playing games.

Thompson also quoted Quichocho as saying in his replies to Frances that he never denied that he had sex with someone or with Kim in the car, to which the lawyer replied "not here."

Thompson asked if Frances was lying to him about the baby wipes. Quichocho replied, "I don't know."

Ground lease

Quichocho admitted that he and his then client, Kim, entered into a business ground lease agreement. He, however stated that his rebuttal expert witness, Guam attorney Jacqueline Taitano Terlaje, issued an opinion concluding he did not commit a violation of the ABA Model Rules of Professional Conduct.

In her opinion, Terlaje stated
See QUICHOCHO on Page 4

For more information: 1-877-310-0512 www.MunicipalDerivativesSettlement.com

Land comp payment, POB, mandatory drug test bills go to Inos

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Besides the surprise passage of a bill allowing casino gaming on Saipan after years of rejecting similar proposals, the Senate also passed other bills on Tuesday night that included a bill that paves the way for payment of judgments without appropriations such as on land claims. Most bills passed are now on their way to Gov. Eloy S.

Inos for action.

Senators also passed two separate pension obligation bond-related bills—one with amendment that goes back to the House and one that is also now headed to the governor for action.

The Senate also passed a bill requiring drug tests for individuals running for public office; it is also headed for the governor for action.

After initially passing Rep.

Ray Tebuteb's (Ind-Saipan) House Bill 18-143 on "first reading" late Tuesday afternoon, the Senate reconsidered on Tuesday night and passed it by a vote of 9-0 on "first and final reading," sending it to the governor for action.

The bill would allow the government to satisfy judgments without an appropriation. In short, the judgments shall be paid "from any available funds

with or without appropriation" from the Legislature.

Outstanding and unpaid judgments and settlements have reached more than \$27 million.

Also by a vote of 9-0, the Senate passed without amendment Rep. Mario Taitano's (Ind-Saipan) HB 18-170, amending the Commonwealth Development Authority Act of 1984 to provide for the issuance of bonds other than general ob-

ligation bonds. The CNMI is preparing to float a POB of \$60 million to \$80 million, or \$120 million. It is now headed to the governor.

Senators also passed BH 18-171, but with amendment from Senate floor leader Ray Yumul (Ind-Saipan), so the bill goes back to the House. It amends the POB law or Public Law 18-12 to provide for the issuance of bonds other than general obli-

tion bonds and pledges gross revenue tax as security for repayment.

The Senate also passed by a vote of 9-0 Rep. Roman Benavente's (Ind-Saipan) HB 18-152, requiring those seeking public office to undergo drug testing.

If signed into law, the measure would require the Commonwealth Election Commission to disclose the drug test results to the public.

Demapan denies rape, claims consensual sex

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho acquitted yesterday Bradley Demapan, a former resort employee accused of raping a female tourist, on the charge of disturbing the peace.

As this developed, the six jurors began deliberating yes-

»Judge dismisses disturbing the peace charge; jurors start deliberations

terday afternoon. They will continue their deliberations today,

Thursday, at 8:15am.

In granting defense attorney Steven Pixley's motion for a judgment of acquittal on the disturbing the peace charge, Camacho noted the lack of evidence and testimony to support it.

Camacho, however, denied Pixley's motion for a judgment of acquittal on the remaining charges of sexual assault in the first degree and assault and battery.

Pixley asked for a judgment of acquittal after calling four witnesses, including Demapan.

Assistant attorney general Barbara Cepeda rested the gov-

ernment's case after their last witness, a police officer, took the witness stand.

In his testimony, the 27-year-old Demapan denied raping the woman, claiming it was consensual sex. He stood up and demonstrated how he and the woman had sex in the bushes north of the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio in the early morning of July 26, 2013. He stated that the tourist even went on top of him.

Attorney Joshua Berger, who

was among the defense's four witnesses, admitted that the alleged victim hired him to sue PIC over the incident.

The lawsuit has not been filed yet. Berger, however, on behalf of the alleged victim, wrote a letter demanding \$300,000 from PIC.

In her testimony, the alleged victim stated she never hired a lawyer. She also denied she was in the process of suing PIC. (Ferdie de la Torre)

China's 'Fashion Travel' returns to Saipan



Media representatives of China's *Fashion Travel* and *Food and Amusement* TV shows and HRB Radio visit Laolao Bay Golf & Resort on Feb. 21, 2014. They were escorted during their FAM tour by Marianas Visitors Authority marketing specialist Laura Hsiao, third from right.

The television program *Fashion Travel* returned to Saipan on Feb. 20-24, 2014, along with two other Chinese media outlets, as part of a familiarization tour organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority and Century Tours.

Fashion Travel of Jilin TV Station airs weekly and targets middle and high-end income groups with information on fashion, travel, and amusement. Their 75-second highlight of the Northern Mariana Islands will air throughout February and

March 2014.

Food and Amusement of Chang Chun TV will feature a 15-minute segment on the Northern Marianas in March. The show airs to 20 million people and features daily living and the introduction of popular foods from around the world.

HRB Art Radio is the second-ranked radio station in Heilongjiang Province with about 10 million listeners. The station will air a 3-minute feature on the Northern Marianas through

March and April.

"At this time of year, the residents of Jilin, China are experiencing temperatures around 20 degree Fahrenheit, so this is a perfect time to showcase the tropical warmth of our islands," said MVA marketing manager Bruce Bateman.

While on Saipan, the media group visited Laolao Bay Golf & Resort, Managaha, DFS Saipan and "I Love Saipan." Meals were enjoyed on a *Stars & Stripes* sunset dinner

cruise, at Kanoa Resort BBQ, at Isla Café, at a Managaha BBQ lunch, at Hyatt Regency Saipan, and at a Fiesta Resort & Spa dinner show. Other activities included an ATV tour with Sky Tour, marine sports, a submarine tour, Kanoa Resort Adventure Zone, and an island and jungle tour. Accommodations were provided by Hyatt Regency Saipan. (MVA)

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QUICHOCHO

From Page 2

that it is her opinion that the record does not support a finding of any ethical violation.

As to Thompson’s question whether Kim was his then cli-

ent on Nov. 21, 2007, when the ground lease agreement was executed, Quichocho stated that he does not recall the exact date when Kim became his actual client.

When Thompson showed him a document that Quichocho himself prepared, the law-

yer confirmed that the memorandum says Kim was his client at that time.

Quichocho explained that in November 2007 he and his wife, Frances, treated Kim as family and at that time Kim needed a property to post bail for her former husband.

Quichocho agreed with Thompson that the ground lease deal can be read as a business transaction between him and Kim.

With respect to the issue of rental, Quichocho admitted that they did not pay Kim all the rent for their apartment unit and his

law office. He said it is because of the offsetting arrangement for legal fees as Kim owed him more than the rental.

Quichocho admitted that when they moved out from Kim’s building in San Jose, they removed some items, including furniture and the kitch-

en sink. The lawyer, however, stated that they removed items that they believe they owned.

Quichocho said the furniture were either given by Kim to Frances as a gift or Frances paid Kim for it. He said he was not privy to Frances and Kim’s discussions about the furniture.

AS GONNO

From Page 1

American Red Cross.

Qing Ying Zheng, sister of victim Qing Xiu Zheng, told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that they were all crying when they

met at the airport.

Qing Ying Zheng, a store manager, said that Jin Kai Hu, the father of their sister’s husband, Guo Huang Xu, was really emotional.

Qing Ying Zheng said that she called the Department of Public Safety yesterday

morning to ask for permission to see the bodies at the Commonwealth Health Center’s morgue, but was told to check with the Commonwealth Bureau of Investigation in Garapan.

She said they proceeded to the CBI office, but an investi-

gator told them they can’t see the bodies yet as the doctor was not done with the examination.

“We thought the autopsy was already done. Our parents really want to see the bodies. It’s already 10 days, but until now we’re not allowed to see

the bodies,” she said, adding that they’re going to bring the bodies back to China.

Police have classified the death as a double homicide. The two reportedly died due to smoke inhalation as a result of the fire that razed their house to the ground in As Gonno.

Last Friday, DPS Commissioner James Deleon Guerrero said that investigators have so far no solid lead in the arson case, but that they are looking into a possible link to the recent arrest of seven men for alleged distribution of methamphetamine or “ice.”

RUSSIA

From Page 1

President Barack Obama, who is under pressure to show he has leverage over Putin in a deepening conflict between East and West. The threat of economic sanctions, along with a series of modest measures that include canceling trade talks with Moscow and suspending plans to attend an international summit in Russia, have so far done little to persuade the Russian leader to pull his forces back from Crimea.

“I’m not optimistic they’re going to leave,” said Michael McFaul, who served as Obama’s ambassador to Russia until just last week.

McFaul, in an interview on MSNBC, said he was expressing his personal view, not speaking on behalf of the administration. White House offi-

cials have condemned Russia’s military maneuvers in Crimea as a violation of international law and insist they would oppose any long-term occupation of the region.

“We would not find that to be acceptable,” White House spokesman Jay Carney said Tuesday.

A senior administration official said it would be up to Ukraine’s central government to decide the future of Crimea, where nearly 60 percent of the population identify themselves as Russians. The official said the U.S. would oppose any Russian efforts to formally annex Crimea or recognize its independence, steps that would echo Moscow’s moves during its 2008 conflict with Georgia, another former Soviet republic.

Ukraine is in the midst of a monthslong political crisis sparked by ousted President

Viktor Yanukovych’s rejection of a partnership agreement with the European Union in favor of historical ties with Moscow. After Yanukovych fled Ukraine last week, Russian forces quickly moved into Crimea, despite Obama’s warnings that there would be costs for violating Ukraine’s territorial integrity.

Putin’s fast and defiant dismissal of Obama’s threats sparked a new round of criticism from the White House’s Republican opponents. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., accused Obama of having “a feckless foreign policy in which nobody believes in America’s strength anymore.”

Obama and his advisers insist they still have an array of options at their disposal, the most stringent being economic sanctions that could go into effect as early as this week. The European Union appears to be

treading more cautiously, but the bloc’s 28 leaders are set to decide on initial sanctions at an emergency meeting in Brussels on Thursday.

But even with tough economic penalties, some regional analysts say it may already be too late to reverse course in Crimea.

“The idea that there’s a contest over Crimea is a little silly,” said Matthew Rojansky, a Russia analyst at the Wilson Center, a think tank in Washington. “It’s in Russian hands and it was always on the verge of being in Russian hands.”

Rojansky said the most pressing concern for the U.S. is instead to keep Putin from pushing into Russian-friendly areas of eastern Ukraine, where U.S. officials are warily eyeing ethnic skirmishes. Putin on Tuesday said he saw no reason for Russia to intervene there at the moment but added that he reserved the right to take

that step if Russian speakers in the region were in danger.

The Crimean peninsula is separated from the rest of Ukraine by geography, history and politics. It only became part of Ukraine when Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev gave the peninsula to his native land in 1954, a transfer that hardly mattered until the Soviet Union broke up in 1991 and Crimea ended up in an independent Ukraine.

Crimea’s port city of Sevastopol is also home to the Russian Black Sea Fleet and its thousands of naval personnel. Yanukovych, the ousted Ukrainian president, extended the fleet’s lease until 2042, but Russia fears that Ukraine’s temporary pro-Western government could evict it.

The U.S. is not calling for a full Russian withdrawal from Crimea, the Obama administration official said, but does want Moscow’s forces to return to their

normal operating position at their base, where they have an agreement with Ukraine to keep up to 11,000 troops. The official wasn’t authorized to discuss the situation by name and would speak only on condition of anonymity.

The situation in Crimea has drawn comparisons to Abkhazia and South Ossetia, two breakaway territories of the former Soviet republic of Georgia. Russia has continued to maintain a military presence in both, violating a cease-fire that ended its 2008 military conflict with Georgia and ignoring repeated condemnations from the U.S. and Europe.

Barry Pavel, who worked on the White House National Security Council under both Obama and President George W. Bush, said reasserting control of Crimea may be even more important to Russia than the Georgian territories.

FLAWS

From Page 1

casino, hotel, and other tourism-related businesses, but sets no timeline.

The casino bill also requires the exclusive Saipan casino license holder to build from the ground up a hotel with at least “2,000 rooms,” but also does not set a timeline nor specify a phased-in approach.

At present, the biggest hotels on Saipan and Tinian have only a little over 400 rooms each.

In October 2013, Inos and House floor leader Ralph Demapan (Cov-Saipan), main author of the casino bill, left for Hong Kong for what the lawmaker later said was a “fact-finding trip” to meet with investor groups that has the almost “\$3 billion” investment plan.

From late January to early February, Senate President Ralph Torres (Ind-Saipan), vice president Victor Hocog (R-Rota), and Sen. Frank Borja (Ind-Tinian) also went to Hong Kong to meet with the same investors.

On Tuesday night, Torres, Hocog, and Borja were among the five senators who voted “yes” to the casino bill, marking the first time in at least four years that the Senate passed any Saipan casino bill from the House. The Senate killed similar bills in the past.

No guarantee

Press secretary Angel Demapan said there is no guarantee that the governor will sign the bill, especially because it is different from previous versions of casino bills and underwent four amendments at the House on Monday.

He describes the bill as “monumental” and “has the potential to change the course of the economy, the government, and the lives of our people,” requiring prudent review.

“It’s going to require that the governor review this thing from all angles, because we don’t want a product that’s not going to work. The governor may want a casino but the governor wants a successful casino, a thriving casino, not just any casino that we think about overnight,” Demapan said in an interview on Capital Hill yesterday afternoon.

The bill specifies that the \$1 million in nonrefundable application fee and the \$30 million in advance license fee payment shall be paid within 15 days of the law’s signing.

The bill has yet to be transmitted to the governor as of yesterday afternoon, so the 40-day period for the governor to act on it still does not run.

Chilling effect

Under the bill, a year after approval and granting of the ex-

clusive casino license, “no new or additional licenses for poker, pachinko and similar amusement machines outside of approved casino establishment or hotel within the Commonwealth shall be granted or allowed to operate.”

Because it says “Commonwealth,” this applies to Saipan, Tinian, and Rota where poker fees have been a major source of funding for scholarships, medical patients’ monthly subsistence allowance, and other programs and services.

Senate floor leader Ray Yumul (Ind-Saipan), one of the four senators that voted “no” to the bill, said the casino bill also “puts the brake” on prospective investors for electronic gaming and video lottery.

Yumul said the nonrefundable \$1 million application fee and the \$30 million in advance license fee payment “within 15 days” of the bill’s enactment “sets prospective investors up for failure” unless the bill was crafted with a specific investor in mind that is willing to let go of \$31 million “within 15 days of the law’s signing.”

He said building a hotel with at least 2,000 rooms would require years, at a time when the CNMI is still unsure whether it will still have continued access to some 10,000 foreign workers beyond Dec. 31,

2014, when the transitional CW program expires.

Tinian Mayor Ramon Dela Cruz also noted that the casino bill creating a Commonwealth Gaming Commission may be “problematic” and could diminish the confidence of Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino’s new investors in the CNMI government’s support of their Tinian project.

Dela Cruz said this in a March 5 letter to Sen. Frank Cruz (R-Tinian), who also voted “no” to the casino bill on Tuesday.

“Congratulations for voting ‘No’ to the latest version of Saipan casino gaming and maintaining the integrity of our commitment to developing the casino industry on Tinian,” the mayor told Cruz, inviting the senator to a meeting “to discuss how to address the current situation and truly move forward with the economic development of Tinian.”

Casino gaming is legal only on Tinian and Rota right now. Saipan voters twice rejected initiatives to legalize casino gaming on Saipan.

‘Devil is in the details’

Sen. Paul Manglona (Ind-Rota), also among those who voted “no” to the casino bill, said it “sounds good” to require an investor to pay at least \$31 million within 15 days of the bill’s signing but a closer look at the

bill’s provisions indicates that the CNMI could be losing more than it could generate once the bill becomes law.

The bill allows a 40-year exclusive Saipan casino license—inclusive of an initial 25-year period and an extension of 15 years—and a second option to renew for another 40 years for a total of 80 years.

The 80-year exclusive license, however, still depends on whether Article 11 or 12 of the NMI Constitution is amended to allow more than 40 years or more than 55 years lease of public land or private land, depending on where the casino hotel will be built. There are pending legislative initiatives to extend leases up to 99 years.

While the CNMI allows an exclusive license for up to 80 years, Manglona said the rate of payment for the license fee is only at \$15 million annually starting on the third or fourth year, and does not go up even if the business expands.

He said the government will end up spending more than it can collect—or not earn anything at all—at least after the first year of operation because the Legislature has to appropriate budget for the commission from the general fund after one year.

Manglona cited that at one point, Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino remitted some \$4

million to the commission, but a much bigger casino hotel on Saipan would require more than that budget for the commission.

“If you add that \$4 million-plus, and then the revenue loss for poker operations, which is some \$10 million a year, then the government will lose and spend over \$14 million to \$15 million a year, the same amount of \$15 million annual payment required of the exclusive casino license for 40 year or for up to 80 years,” Manglona added.

He said if there’s one good news, it could be the immediate infusion of the \$31 million in application fee and advance license fee payment covering two years.

“That one, the government can pay the 25 percent pension cut for retirees which is about \$17 million, and the remaining would be to pay the lawyers in the settlement case. After that, it’s like going back to zero or not earning additional income for the government,” he added.

Manglona also noted that the bill gives the exclusive gaming licensee a rebate offset amount of 100 percent of the gross gaming revenue.

“The more you read the bill, the more you discover problems,” said Manglona, commenting on the “rushed” nature of the bill’s passage in the Senate.

SAT-10, SBA tests abolished in public schools

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Public school students will no longer take the examinations they used to have at the end of every school year. The CNMI State Board of Education approved Tuesday to do away with both the Standards Based Assessment and the Stanford Achievement Test 10th Edition (SAT-10).

At the recommendation of Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, the board approved the implementation of a new assessment test called ACT Aspire starting school year 2014-2015. This test is designed to assess students' readiness in English, science, language arts, math, and reading and writing.

SAT-10 is a standardized test administered to all students in grades 3 through 12. The SBA test, meantime, is a battery test that weighs students' level of knowledge as aligned with the system's benchmarks and standards.

According to Sablan, Pearson suspended and took out SAT-10 and developed the ACT Aspire test to replace it.

The board adopted the policy that endorsed SAT-10 as the CNMI-PSS statewide assessment in the 1990s. On Tuesday, Sablan asked to have that policy amended to reflect the implementation of ACT Aspire as the new statewide assessment to be used by the PSS.

In a lengthy discussion during the meeting, Sablan and Jackie Quitugua, associate commissioner for instruction and curriculum, took turns explaining the need to adopt the new set of assessment exams.

They described the ACT Aspire as more comprehensive and aligned with the PSS common core standards.

Sablan disclosed that PSS initially considered three alternatives to replace SAT-10 but ACT Aspire was chosen after determining that the two others only cover assessments in three areas: English, language

arts, and math.

Despite this shift to ACT Aspire, the SBA test will still be used to test students' knowledge in CNMI history and Chamorro Carolinian Heritage Language Studies, or CCHLS.

"The SBA that we are cur-

rently using...will still exist for NMI History and CCHLS since Act Aspire will not be able to account for learning in these two areas," according to Quitugua.

Sablan and Quitugua disclosed that ACT Aspire is

designed to be taken with a computer but it also offers paper-and-pencil administration. The duration the test is about three to four hours; the SAT-10 and SBA tests take eight to nine hours.

Since not every public school student has a computer or laptop, the test will also be administered in its initial year with

paper and pencil.

In terms of cost, it was learned that the new test, if taken on the Internet, would cost \$27 per subject.

PSS federal programs officer Tim Thornburgh assured the board that PSS has enough funds to pay for the new test to be administered to all public school students.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Coast Guard training at Warning Area 517

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. Coast Guard will conduct training at Warning Area 517 on March 7 from 8am to 4pm. The general public especially fishermen, commercial pilots and marine tour operators are advised to stay clear from the area during the times and dates indicated. W-517 is an irregular shaped polygon

comprising of 14,000 nautical square miles of airspace that begins south of Guam and extends south-southwest in international waters. This will affect fishing in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Reef and Galvez Bank. (PR)

Family grief support meeting today

A group that is in the process of forming a Compassionate

Friends chapter on Saipan will be holding its monthly grief support meeting today, March 6, from 6pm to 7:30pm, in the NMPASI conference room on Middle Road, in Gualo Rai. For more information, call Jill Derickson at 989-9821 or e-mail jilld@pticom.com. To learn more about The Compassionate Friends, visit their website at www.compassionatefriends.org. (PR)

WSR School shirts now available for sale

The last day to order William S. Reyes Elementary School shirts will be on March 28, 2014, Friday. Youth sizes XS-L and adult S-XL will cost \$10. Adult XXL and XXXL will be \$20. Please stop by the main office to place your orders. Available colors: Carolina blue, navy blue, royal blue, pink, yellow, gray, and black. (PR)

CHCC admits filling orthopedic doctor post may take some time

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

While the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. has been successful in hiring more doctors for the Commonwealth Health Center, there remains a challenge to fill the orthopedic surgeon position after it was disclosed that the arrival of the prospective candidate could take some time.

Interim CEO Esther Muña told the board Thursday that the candidate who has been chosen to fill the post is still working on his papers in order to be able to work at the public hospital.

» **Muña bares numerous inquiries; additional docs expected soon**

Muña did not disclose the name of the candidate but said the physician was recruited from off-island through the J-1 visa.

"We're doing pretty good [in the recruitment] and the only issue we have now is the orthopedic surgeon," Muña told the board.

She disclosed that the candidate's J-1 visa was initially rejected by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

"He's spending his own money now basically to hire lawyers in the U.S. for the J-1 visa that was rejected," she said, adding that the physician has asked that his waiver be transferred to the CNMI so he could start working for the hospital.

For other vacant positions, Muña said she has been getting several inquiries and referrals for doctors' positions. In fact, she said, CHC expects to get one internal medicine physician soon, to bring the IM doctors'

count to five.

By summer, the pediatric department is expected to have six doctors from the current four.

The general surgery department, she disclosed, now has two doctors while an anesthesiologist is expected to be hired soon. This, she said, is a replacement position.

According to Muña, the corporation is implementing a "consistent and centralized" recruitment for all positions where each and every application is

thoroughly reviewed, including checking of references and police records.

She also cited the important function of the credentials committee in determining the right candidate for medical positions.

At the meeting, trustee Philip Mendiola-Long asked the board to seek a legal opinion regarding the board's participation in the credentialing of staff.

In reviewing Public Law 16-51, which created the corporation and its board, Mendiola-Long expressed concern about the mandates of the law that requires the advisory board's "oversight" over the credentialing staff.

"What step in the process do we need to get involved in credentialing staff? Is it after or before the signing of contract?" he asked.

Trustee Anthony Raho said that "credentialing is a hospital function" and that it must take ownership of that. He said the role of the board is only an "oversight of the credentialing process" to ensure that policies and procedures are in place.

PICKS OF THE WEEK 2

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Alleged top 2 'ice' suppliers, 1 distributor indicted

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Xing Bo Fang and Yu Hua Wang, who are respectively the alleged leader and the second in command of a group of methamphetamine or "ice" suppliers on Saipan, were indicted in federal court on Tuesday.

A separate indictment was also filed against Hong Wang, who was among seven men recently arrested for alleged "ice" distribution on the island.

The indictment charged Fang and Yu Hua Wang, both 46, with conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of "ice" and distribution of 50 grams or more of "ice." In addition, Yu Hua Wang was charged with

distribution of methamphetamine.

The U.S. government also sought to forfeit Wang's leasehold of a property located on Sailing Drive in Dandan, a white 2004 Lexus ES330 four-door sedan, and \$11,400 in cash, upon their conviction.

According to the indictment, Fang and Yu Hua Wang conspired with each other and with other persons to distribute 50 grams of more of "ice" on Dec. 27, 2013.

Drug Enforcement Administration special agent Jacqueline R. Gordon disclosed in documents filed in federal court that they were able to seize 135.6 gross grams of "ice" during their operation against Fang and Yu Hua Wang.

The separate indictment charged Hong Wang, 40, with two counts of distribution of methamphetamine. The U.S. government also sought to forfeit Wang's 2005 Toyota Corolla sedan and \$4,600 cash. Hong Wang allegedly distributed "ice" in March and August 2013.

A Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force's confidential source allegedly managed to buy \$2,400 worth of "ice" from Hong Wang inside Wang's car at the American Memorial Park. There were no added details about the alleged August 2013 transaction.

Aside from the three, also arrested were Daniel A. Castro, 32; Vicente S. Palacios, 38; Bao Zhong Wang, 46; and Le Xiang Chen, 63.

PSS allotment shortfall down to only \$700,000

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Budget allotments from the central government to the Public School System are slowly trickling in, with over \$13 million in total transfers to date, according to PSS finance director Derek Sasamoto.

PSS is earmarked \$33 million for the current fiscal, which the system supposedly gets through weekly allotments amounting to \$616,000.

Sasamoto disclosed to *Saipan Tribune* that the Finance Department made its latest deposit of \$1.2 million on March 4, bringing to over \$13 million the total allotments PSS has received.

From the \$2 million allotment shortfall owed as of Feb. 27, the delayed amount is now down to just over \$700,000 inclusive of the \$1.2 million transferred on Tuesday.

Prior to the March 4 deposit, Finance gave PSS \$1.1 million on Feb. 20 and \$300,000 on Feb. 27, Sasamoto said.

When asked how the system copes with the delayed allotments, Sasamoto explained that PSS holds back on its spending and prioritizes things that are absolutely necessary. He credited the schools as well for holding back on their operational needs.

"Yes, we purchase everything needed for curriculum and instruction, but we hold back on other [expenses] and monitor our cash flow," he told *Saipan Tribune*.

During Tuesday's board meeting, Sasamoto disclosed that of the \$32.7 million budget for fiscal year 2014, there remains a balance of \$21.7 million to be used until the end of the fiscal year in September. As of Feb. 18, PSS has already expended \$10.9 million of its budget.

It was reported that of the \$28.1 million budget for personnel, PSS has already spent \$8.8 million as of Feb. 18, resulting in a balance of \$19.2 million for the rest of the fiscal year.

For operations and all others—budgeted at \$2.2 million—PSS has already spent about \$1.3 million, leaving a balance of \$884,499.

Expenses on utilities have so far reached \$783,959 as of Feb. 18. The budget for this item is \$2.3 million; the remaining balance is \$1.5 million.



JAYSON CAMACHO

NEW BEACH SIGNAGES

Representatives of the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality, Homeland Security, American Red Cross-NMI Chapter, Department of Public Safety's Boating Safety, Pacific Islands Club, and Department of Public Lands unveil yesterday the new signage installed at Sugar Dock in Susupe. The new signs warn beachgoers: "Rip Currents: Watch Out!" and "High Surf." Besides Sugar Dock, 11 other beaches now have new signs that encourage the public to check conditions for safety before entering the waters. Other signs that can be seen on other beaches include "Strong Current" and "Keep Off!" for slippery rocks.



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Bachelor's Degree in accountancy, business management, urban planning or construction. At least 7 years work related experience with no less than 5 years experience in managerial or higher-level position, preferably in property development industry, urban planning or construction. Must have experience in project preparation and management including strategic planning, annual budgeting, human resources management, project analysis, financial management and overall administration of the company's resources. Requires excellent multi-tasking, organizational, interpersonal and leadership skills. Must have expertise in Word, Excel, Power Point and CAD.

Finance Manager

Bachelor's Degree in Accountancy with at least 5 years work experience as accounting or finance manager. Must have extensive experience in preparation of financial reports, preparation of financial budgets and business forecast. Requires excellent communication, multi-tasking, organizational and interpersonal skills. Must have expertise in the use of Excel, SAP R3, Financial Controlling (FICO) system and Microsoft software.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at
SUNSHINE 100 RESORT DEV'T. CO., LTD. Human Resources Office
located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan.
Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience.
To be considered, applications must be submitted no later
than 5:00pm, Wednesday, March 12, 2014.

A pre-employment drug testing will be required.

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Submission/Opening Date: March 28, 2014 Time: 10:00 a.m.

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Prospective bidders may retrieve a copy of the complete contents of the Invitation for Bids at the Office of the Director, Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base Dr., Saipan, during regular working hours.

The CNMI government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or portions thereof, and wave immaterial defects if to do so would be in the best interest of the CNMI government.

/s/ **MARVIN K. SEMAN**
Special Assistant for Homeland Security

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director, P&S

Century Finance Company, Ltd. is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

Accountant

Associate's Degree in Finance or Accounting with at least 3 years work-related experience in a financing or commercial/credit loan business. Must be proficient in the use of SAP R3 FICO and Loan Management Information Systems, MS Excel, Word and PowerPoint software. Must be able to work under time pressure and must work flexible hours. CPA not required.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at Century Finance Company, Ltd. office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Monday, March 17, 2014.

Century Finance Company, Ltd. is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Territorial highlights emerge from Obama’s budget

WASHINGTON, D.C.—President Obama released his budget proposal for fiscal year 2015 yesterday and highlights for the Northern Mariana Islands and other U.S. insular areas were to be found within the hundreds of pages outlin-

ing the President’s plans and detailing individual agency’s spending. Among the proposals particularly aimed at the insular areas were an exemption from Medicaid funding caps to support fraud control units,

a continuation of the higher set-aside for water and sewer funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and an increase in technical assistance monies managed by the Office of Insular Affairs at the Interior Department.

President’s budget seeks \$678.1M for US Territories and Freely Associated States

WASHINGTON, D.C.—President Obama has proposed a fiscal year 2015 budget of \$678.1 million for the Office of Insular Affairs, which works to empower U.S.-affiliated insular communities by encouraging economic activity, building governmental capacity, improving quality of life, and promoting good governance. The budget request includes \$92.2 million in annual appropriations and \$585.9 million in permanent and indefinite appropriations for fiscal payments mandated by law to U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States.

“The 2015 budget request demonstrates President Obama’s continued commitment to the U.S. insular areas,” said Acting Assistant Secretary for Insular Areas Lori Faeth. “In the face of fiscal austerity, the President’s proposal will enable OIA to continue to work toward building local government capacity, including skills, training, and education, and leverage resources in order to improve the quality of life in insular communities.”

The request includes \$61.2 million to address a variety of technical assistance and operational programs in the U.S.-affiliated island communities, including Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Within this amount, the 2015 budget makes investments of \$3 million to pursue sustainable energy strategies; \$2.9 million primarily focused on school

maintenance; \$17.5 million to support improvements in insular area government management; and \$22.8 million to support the operations of the American Samoa government.

Current mandatory appropriations of \$27.7 million will continue to be used to undertake capital improvement projects that create economic opportunity in U.S. territories and improve the quality of life in those communities. With these funds, American Samoa is scheduled to receive \$9.3 million in CIP funding; the CNMI, \$9.6 million; Guam, \$5.8 million; and the U.S. Virgin Islands, \$3.1 million.

Permanent appropriations for 2015 include \$328.4 million in payments to Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands. It is estimated Guam would receive \$65.3 million for taxes collected in the territory via the IRS “mirror” tax code that are by law transferred to the Government of Guam to support its public safety, health care, education, and other public services and operations. The U.S. Virgin Islands is scheduled to receive an estimated \$263.1 million for federal taxes collected on distilled spirits in the territory that are by law transferred to the local government to support its operations and public services.

The budget also includes

\$257.5 million in payments to the Freely Associated States under the Compact of Free Association legislation, including \$75.8 million for the Marshall Islands, \$109.8 million for the Federated States of Micronesia, \$41.5 million for Palau, and \$30.0 million for Compact Impact. The Compact requires the United States to provide regional defense and security for the Freely Associated States as well as economic and social development assistance and financial support for their governments’ operations.

On Sept. 3, 2010, the U.S. government and the government of Palau successfully concluded their review of the Compact of Free Association and signed a 15-year extension agreement that includes a \$250.0 million package of assistance through 2024. Under the agreement, Palau committed to undertake economic, legislative, financial and management reforms. The conclusion of the agreement reaffirms the close partnership between the United States and Palau. The legislative proposal transmitted to Congress on Jan. 14, 2011, is expected to be enacted prior to the implementation of the 2015 budget; therefore, OIA is not requesting current appropriations for Palau Compact assistance in 2015. *(OIA)*

Waters around FDM open to fishermen

ASAN, Guam—Waters surrounding the island of Farallon de Medinilla are deemed safe for local fishermen from March 7, 12:01am to March 16, 11:59pm.

The general public is advised to remain off the island of Farallon de Medinilla due to safety and security concerns.

Farallon de Medinilla plays a special and unique role in national defense because its location provides access frequency that supports established training requirements. In addition, the air and sea space in the Farallon provides sufficient room for the many different attack profiles necessary to replicate training opportunities in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

L&T Group of Companies, Ltd. is inviting qualified U.S. workers to apply for the following positions:

General Maintenance Worker

High school diploma or equivalent with experience in equipment and appliance repair. Must have some basic knowledge and troubleshooting experience in plumbing and electrical systems, masonry, carpentry, and other cleaning and general maintenance work inside and outside facilities. Must be able to lift and move heavy supplies and objects. Must be willing to work flexible hours.

Housekeeper (2)

High school diploma or GED Certificate. Dependable attendance, hard working and follows directions well. Must be available to work early mornings, late nights and weekends.

Messenger

High school graduate. Dependable attendance, hard working and follows directions well. Good oral and written communication skills and good driving skills are required. Must provide and maintain own vehicle for work and must be available to work early mornings, late nights and weekends.

Applications can be obtained and submitted at L&T Group of Companies, Ltd. office located on the 2nd Floor, JP Center Building at Beach Road, Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Monday, March 17, 2014.

L&T Group of Companies, Ltd. is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

“I appreciate that the President was able to respond to the request the delegates sent him for increased funding for technical assistance this year,” Sablan said. “While \$3 million is not much in the context of the entire federal budget, targeted in the insular areas that money can make a difference.”

Technical assistance funding from the Office of Insular Affairs was one of the financial lifelines that has helped the Northern Marianas hospital work through its certification problems.

“Another area of particular importance to us is a proposal to expand Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership and a request for an additional \$120 million to strengthen Head Start. It is well established that children who are able to receive educational services

at a very early age do better all through their school years and into later life. We want as many children as possible in the Northern Marianas to have that advantage.”

The President’s budget also calls for continuation of the 1.5 percent set-aside for insular areas from the Clean Water and Safe Drinking Water grant programs. The set-asides jumped from 0.28 percent and 0.33 percent, respectively, in fiscal year 2010 after Sablan made improved infrastructure funding a priority. Since then the Northern Marianas has received over \$35 million and achieved 24/7 water service on Saipan 94 percent of the time.

The President’s budget also supports lifting the cap on federal Medicaid expenditures in territories for the purpose of setting up fraud control units.

Ten million dollars is allotted for this purpose over 10 years. “Medicaid Fraud Control Units have demonstrated success in recovering Medicaid dollars,” the budget reads. Territories would also be exempted from the statutory ceiling on quarterly federal payments for the units.

The President’s budget submission to Congress is a first step in the annual process of funding the federal government. Next, congressional subcommittees will begin writing the legislation that actually appropriates money; and Members of Congress, who have been lobbying the President for inclusion in his budget, will shift their focus to their colleagues, the appropriators, who make the call on which programs should be funded and at what amounts.

Fiscal year 2015 begins on Oct. 1. *(Office of the Delegate)*



Kanoa Resort

Saipan

(1) OPERATIONS MANAGER
Qualifications: Associate’s Degree or a minimum of two years experience preferably in Tourism, Hotel & Restaurant or Business Management. Ability to work flexible hours including nights, weekends, and holidays. Must possess strong leadership and communication skills. Organized, motivated, analytical and creative, as well as comfortable in directing others. Must be proficient in various computer software applications and has a proven track record of meeting budgets, an understanding of P&L statements and cost/inventory control.

(1) MANAGER, SPORTS AND RECREATION
Qualifications: Associates degree in an appropriate field or equivalent years of relevant experience. At least 3 years experience in sports and recreation, at managerial capacity, in a five-star Hotel, Club, or Resort. Team player, excellent communication, organizational, and multitasking skills are a must. Must be able to work flexible hours including nights, weekends, and holidays.

(4) GUEST SERVICES AGENT
Qualifications: High School diploma or GED certificate. Minimum of 2 years work experience in providing quality customer and personal services. Must be able to handle customer complaints with efficiency. Have multitasking skills, be detailed-oriented, and be able to solve problems in order to effectively deal with internal and external customers. Must be able to work flexible hours including nights, weekends and holidays.

(1) GARDENER / LANDSCAPER
Qualifications: High school graduate or equivalent. Two years previous work experience. Basic knowledge of Horticulture. Must be able to work outdoors exposed to all weather conditions. Employees in these occupations need anywhere from a few days to a few months of training.

(1) ELECTRICIAN
Qualifications: High School graduate or equivalent. Able to service, repair, calibrate, regulate, fine-tune or test machines, devices and equipment that operate primarily on electrical or electronic principles. Must be able to work in a flexible way that allows for changes in assignments and priorities depending upon identified needs of the department. Minimum of five (5) years work experience required.

(1) A/C REFRIGERATION MECHANIC / TECHNICIAN
Qualifications: Able to install and repair industrial and commercial refrigeration systems. Require post-secondary instruction from technical and trade schools or community colleges that offer programs in air-conditioning and refrigeration or and associate’s degree. Completion of an apprenticeship program or two (2) to four (4) years of experience.

(4) FOOD AND BEVERAGE WAIT STAFF
Qualifications: High school diploma or equivalent. At least 6 months serving experience preferably in hotel operations. Good customer service, communications and interpersonal skills are required. Knowledge of cash, check and credit card handling procedures required.

(4) LIFEGUARD
Qualifications: High school diploma or equivalent. Must be able to swim and have an outgoing personality and the ability to motivate with enthusiasm. Proposed ideas or find ways to improve services, systems and/or procedures. Direct and lead activities for guests of all ages. Certified CPR, First Aid and Lifeguard.

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Qualifications: Associate’s Degree preferred. At least two years of relevant experience. Provide high-level administrative support by conducting research, preparing statistical reports, handling information requests, preparing financial statements, and performing clerical functions such as preparing correspondence, receiving visitors, arranging conference calls, and scheduling meetings. May also train and supervise lower-level clerical staff.

Interested applicants may send their applications to hr@kanoaresort.com. Application forms may be obtained at our Security Office located at the back wing of our resort. To be considered, applications must be submitted not later than March 6, 2014. Background checks and pre-employment drug testing will be required prior to employment.

Kanoa Resort is an Equal Opportunity Employer
Qualified Women, Minorities, Veterans and Persons with Disabilities are urged to apply.

Mock trial competition this Friday

The CNMI Bar Association, together with the Commonwealth Judiciary, is hosting the 2014 CNMI High School Mock Trial Competition on Friday, March 7, 2014, at the Guma Hustisia in Susupe, Saipan. The competition's first round will begin at 8:30am with the finals to occur at 4:30pm.

Mock trial is a scholastic competition between both public and private schools throughout the CNMI. The CNMI High School Mock Trial competition was started in 1999 by the CNMI Bar Association and former justice Ramon Villagomez as a way to introduce high school students to the justice system. Each participating school receives a fictitious case file complete with witness statements, exhibits, rules of evidence, and an abbreviated law library. Teams comprising of 7-14 students have spent months practicing with the assistance of their volunteer attorney and teacher coaches to prepare for the competition.

This year's problem is a criminal case, *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands vs. Erin Napu*. The case involves a first degree murder trial in the District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands in the fictional county



Defending champion Mt. Carmel School.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

of Anatahan. The defendant, Erin Napu, admits to shooting her husband, J.R. Satdinas, but claims she acted in self-defense to protect herself from Satdinas.

During the mock trial competition, students will portray the role of attorneys and witnesses and must present both sides of the case as the plaintiff and defense. The students will be judged based on their knowledge of the evidence

and ability to present a logical and persuasive case. CNMI justices, judges, and attorneys serve as presiding judges and jurors/evaluators. The public is welcome to attend.

The goals of the competition are to promote and further the understanding and appreciation of the judicial system, court procedures and the legal system; to promote better communication and cooperation between the legal and

educational communities; to improve awareness of current social and legal issues; and to provide an educational event to support students of all abilities and varying interests.

The winning team will travel to Madison, Wisconsin, in May to represent the CNMI at the 31st annual National High School Mock Trial Competition. Mt. Carmel School is the CNMI's defending champion this year. *(NMI Judiciary)*

Energy saving campaign reaches out to Tinian

The Department of Public Works through the Energy Division Office will be hosting the 2014 Tinian Energy Awareness Campaign on Saturday, March 15, 2014, with two sessions (morning and afternoon) at the Tinian Gymnasium.

This event will provide residents tips on how to conserve energy at homes and how to save money using efficient products that carry the Energy

Star label and educate the community on the importance of energy conservation in the CNMI.

The Energy Division through its Energy, Education, Efficiency and Conservation Program efforts will be raffling either a 16" pedestal fan or portable stove for each attendee.

The schedule of events on March 15 is as follows:

- 1st session: 9am to 11am
- 2nd session: 2pm to 4pm

Due to limited seating, interested individuals must pre-register with the CNMI Energy Division office to confirm attendance. Pre-registration started on Feb. 27, 2014, and will end on Wednesday, March 12, 2014.

For more information and to register, call the Energy Division at 664-4480/4, Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm. In addition, registered attendees will be required to present

a valid photo identification card and a copy of their most recent utility bill in their name to be allowed to participate in the scheduled sessions. Those who fail to provide a photo ID and recent CUC bill at the time of the session will be turned away.

This project is made possible through a grant under the State Energy Program, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. *(Office of the Governor)*

Rota next up for energy saving campaign

The Department of Public Works through the Energy Division Office will be hosting the 2014 Rota Energy Awareness Campaign on Saturday, March 22, 2014, with two sessions (morning and afternoon) at the Rota Mayor's Office.

This event will give residents tips on how to conserve energy at homes and how to save money using efficient products that carry the Energy Star label and

educate the community on the importance of energy conservation in the CNMI.

The Energy Division through its Energy, Education, Efficiency and Conservation Program efforts will be distributing reusable shopping bags with Home Energy Savings Kits and raffle of either a 16" pedestal fan or portable stove for each attendee.

The schedule on Saturday, March 22, is as follows:

- 1st session: 9am to 11am
- 2nd session: 2pm to 4pm

Due to limited seating, interested individuals must pre-register with the CNMI Energy Division office to confirm attendance. Pre-registration started on Feb. 27 and will end on Friday, March 14, 2014.

For more information and to register, call the Energy Division at 664-4480/4, Monday to Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm. In addition, registered attendees will be required to present a valid photo identification card and a copy of

their most recent utility bill in their name to be allowed to participate in the scheduled sessions. Those who fail to provide a photo ID and recent CUC bill at the time of the session will be turned away.

This project is made possible through a grant under the State Energy Program, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. *(Office of the Governor)*

SPC marks 65th year of moving to New Caledonia

NOUMEA, New Caledonia—The Secretariat of the Pacific Community celebrated yesterday the 65th anniversary of the establishment of its headquarters in New Caledonia.

Founded in 1947 under the Canberra Agreement, SPC first had its temporary head-

quarters in Mosman, Sydney in Australia before moving to Noumea to the former "US Headquarters - South Pacific Base Command" used by the American military forces during World War II and nicknamed "The Pentagon." The SPC's current Headquarters at

95 promenade Roger Laroque in Noumea were inaugurated in October 1995.

SPC, a veritable hub for international and regional cooperation in the Pacific, has formed a win-win partnership with the New Caledonia government that allows SPC to

benefit from a favorable setting for its work to promote the development of Pacific island countries and territories. On its part, New Caledonia benefits from SPC's internationally recognized expertise in a wide range of areas such as fisheries, geosciences, public health, agriculture, statistics and transport. *(SPC)*

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

March 6, 2006

'Spare NMC from budget cuts'

The House minority bloc has warned the administration of the possibility that budget cuts may result in closure of the Northern Marianas College's Rota and Tinian campuses. The minority members, led by Rep. Arnold I. Palacios, said this in a resolution asking the governor to spare the college from the budget cuts being implemented against all government agencies. According to the resolution, the administration's budget reduction analysis proposes to cut NMC's FY 2006 continuing resolution budget level of \$8 million by 20- to 48- percent.

New DPS chief: Boosting morale is top agenda

The new commissioner of the Department of Public Safety has put in on his top agenda to boost the morale of local law enforcers. Barely a week in office, acting DPS Commissioner Ernest Williams said he planned to focus on morale issues in his few weeks as the new head of the department, which he observed employed a lot of hardworking people. "People always work with you if they know that you work with them and support them. I just want to assure them that I support them in everything they do," Williams said. He added that he planned to spend the next 30 to 60 days evaluating the overall police organization and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system.

March 6, 2007

'White House no position on NMI immigration'

The White House has not issued any position on the CNMI immigration issue and is, in fact, "unaware" of the current talks about renewed U.S. Congress attempts to implement federal immigration control in the Commonwealth. Rudy Pamintuan, chairman of the White House Advisory Commission on Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, said he personally inquired about the issue with the White House policy office. "I contacted the policy folks at the White House. They have not really looked into it. There is no position either for or against it because they have not even looked at the issue," said Pamintuan.

Law on utility privatization still being modified

The privatization of Saipan's utility is already in progress, but the CNMI government does not seem quite done with the rules yet. The House of Representatives last week passed a proposed legislation setting new criteria for who may qualify to take over Saipan's power plants. Authored by House Speaker Oscar M. Babauta, House Bill 15-237 would allow more companies to bid for the privatization project. Currently, the law requires that a bidding company be licensed to do business in the CNMI for 10 years. In addition, the firm must have engaged in a business closely related to a utility service for the same period.

March 6, 2008

Yumul: House ready to amend budget bill

The chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee said he and his members are willing to amend the 2008 budget plan that the lower chamber passed Monday after the Office of the Governor said it would lead to an \$11 million deficit. Rep. Ray N. Yumul said his committee acted in good faith when it formulated the \$167.48 million appropriations bill and majority of his colleagues in the House saw nothing wrong with the legislation when they passed it on March 3. "We are ready to amend our budget as soon as the governor gives us communication indicating, for example, that the budget resources are on a downward trend. ... We want to know how much and then we'll go back and amend the budget to reflect the amount," he said.

Unkempt site of Tatachog dump draws concerns

Rota Municipal Council member Vicente M. Calvo has raised a concern about the Tatachog dump site, which he said appears to be abandoned and neglected. In a letter to the Department of Public Works resident director Martin S. Atalig, Calvo said the people of Rota have witnessed in the past that at least some control had been taken by DPW to keep the site organized. "Today, however, it appears to be abandoned and neglected," Calvo stated. He said the Tatachog dump site used to be manned so that people could be guided to where they could dump their trash. "Now that it is unmanned, people sometimes dump uncontrollably anywhere around the site including the secondary access (Old Japanese railroad) road."

Island Snapshots

HAPPY CUPID THROWBACK

JC Café hosted a post-Valentine presentation called Happy Cupid Throwback on Feb. 22, 2014. The event was sponsored by IT&E, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Taro Sue Corp., Pacific Amusement, Traders Insurance, Triple J Wholesale, Coca-Cola Beverage Co., Island Touch by Phillip, Pacific Quick Print, Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, Susan's Creation, Long Feng, 3K's Market, Slake Beauty Salon, Queen's Bar & Barbecue, Noy's Thai Massage, Mercy's Salon, Johnson's Refrigeration & Air Conditioning, Tinian Hardware, SM MART Tinian by Alma, Julian Hofschneider - Zack's CD Rack, Vina Hofschneider, Mom's Garden, United Filipino Organization-Tinian, Tinian Marianas Lions Club, and Allen Palacios of IT&E.



Rene Binghit, center, of Tinian Dynasty, is declared the champion of the Stars on 45 Singing Contest hosted by JC Café on Feb. 22, 2014. Others in photo are, from left, host Aida Juma-oas, and contest judges Joe Cruz, Marian Palacios, and Paul Madriaga.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Stars on 45 Singing Contest second placer Felix Tang, second from left, of Tinian Dynasty is presented with his prize by, from left, host Aida Juma-oas, and contest judges Joe Cruz, Paul Madriaga, and Marian Palacios.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



The JC Café Couple of the Night 2014 was won by Steven and Chloe Mendiola, center. They are flanked by contest judges Paul Madriaga and Tess Sanchez.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Contestants participate in the parlor game, "Movin' on Up Coke Cup Challenge," which Teddy Dantes of Tinian Dynasty won.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



I WON A YEAR OF FREE INSURANCE

PROMO WINNER

Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. staff member Janel Pangelinan, right, presents a prize for a year of free auto insurance to the company's second lucky 40 for 40 Giveaway winner James Sirok, left. Forty for forty means forty winners in celebration of forty years for a year of free auto insurance. Last drawing is slated for Dec. 15. You must be a policyholder of Pacifica to be entered to win. For information about Pacifica's 40 for 40 giveaway log on to www.pacificains.com/fortyforforty or call 234-6267/7722/7310.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUT
Happy advance birthday to the greatest uncle ever, Rudy Sablan. We love you and we wish you the best and many more to come. Greetings from Rhian Napu, Tyreen Mercedes and The Sheriff's.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

US, allies must present united response

Russia's invasion and occupation of a region in Ukraine demand a unified and robust response from the United States and its allies that imposes serious penalties on Vladimir Putin and the Kremlin. The West must deliver a message that deters further hostile moves by Russia's military.

Forget the exhortations of armchair strategists who would take American military forces to DEFCON 1 combat status immediately. Russian forces cannot be dislodged at this point without raising the stakes to the level of a possible showdown between nuclear powers. No one wants that.

Forget, as well, the lame excuses of apologists who say Putin's action was necessary to protect Russia's vital national interest in an area of strategic importance to his country. That's bogus.

Ukraine is a sovereign country that has rejected the Russian bear's embrace in no uncertain terms. Its people have been demonstrating since November against the puppet government of the pro-Russian Ukrainian leader Viktor Yanukovich, forcing him to flee when he realized his situation was untenable.

His flight exposed the failure of Russian policy in the Ukraine, an embarrassment that the Kremlin's leaders apparently found intolerable.

President Obama raised the possibility of using U.N. peacekeepers to protect ethnic Russians in the Crimea if it became necessary, but Mr. Putin decided that a show of force would satisfy his personal needs and Russia's interests much better, regardless of the cost.

The Russian leader needed to remind political adversaries inside Russia and pesky neighbors on the periphery that he's the boss. For that, he needed a macho display of forcefulness and was only too willing to use troops and weapons to get the point across.

The response from the United States and its allies should be twofold: Help Ukraine's fragile new government create a stable economy and impose significant sanctions on Russia.

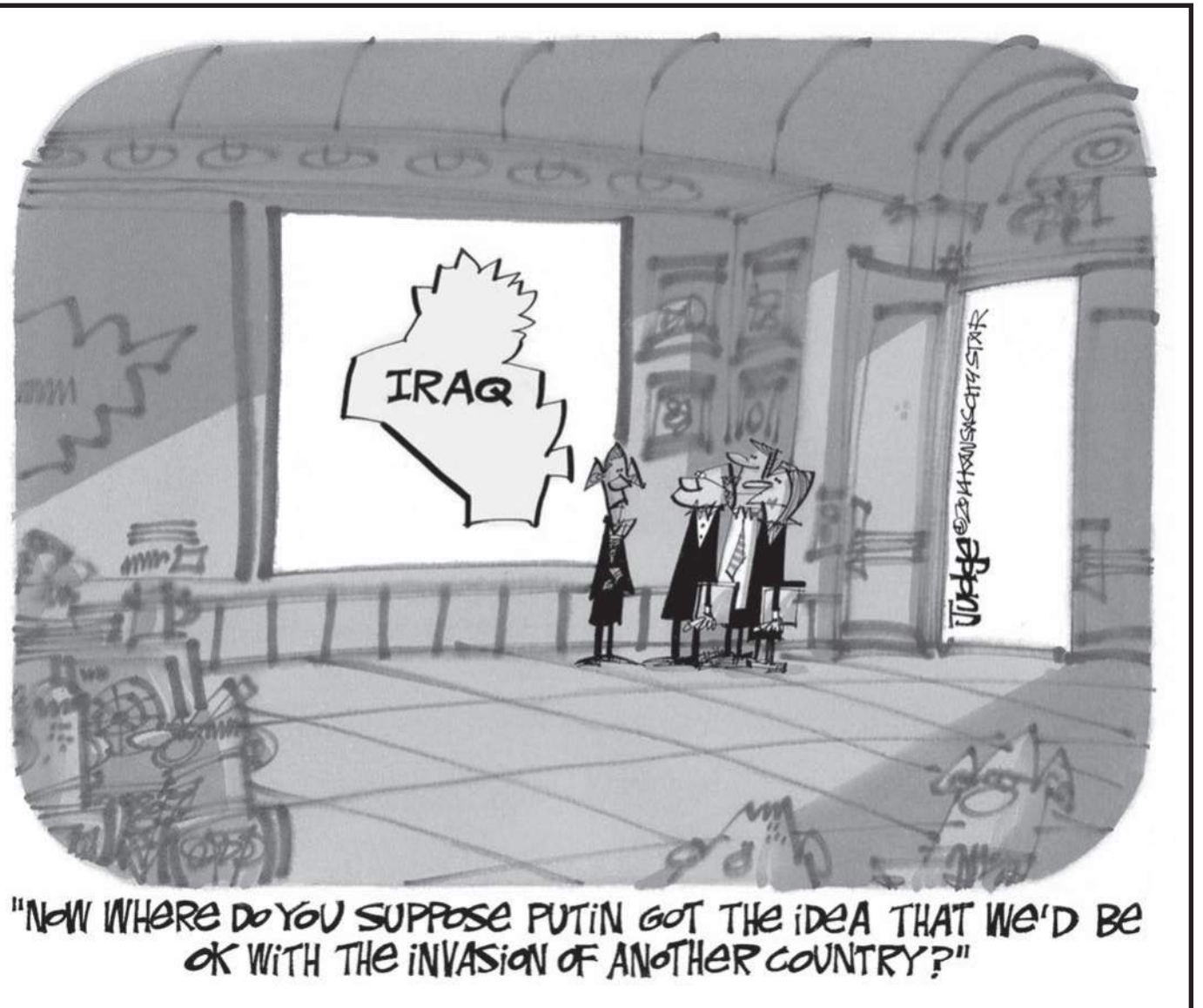
Congress can offer Ukraine the kind of bilateral loan guarantees that this country has provided to Israel and other nations in times of need. Nothing would do more to show American resolve in support of Ukraine in this moment of crisis. If Ukraine slips into economic chaos—it's broke and sinking fast—only Putin and his friends will benefit. Congress can make a vital contribution here.

President Obama's first task is to persuade European allies to present a united front, along with the United States, to get Russia's attention. That's not an easy task, considering Europe is dependent on energy supplies that come from Russia, but Putin is counting on political divisions within the European Union to stymie a response. Disunity among the allies plays into his hands.

The economic and diplomatic sanctions should be quickly forthcoming, including targeting Putin's friends in Russia's new economic elite and refusing to do business as usual in international forums until a resolution to the Ukrainian crisis is found.

Aggression unanswered is aggression encouraged. That's reason enough to move swiftly.

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Saipan at a glance

Ifroze my butt in China's *Dong Bei* for the last three months, so I am pleased to bring out the short pants, the cotton shirts, rubber sandals, and walk the sidewalks of Garapan and Gualo Rai for a week. Wearing shoes was not typhoon friendly as a low depression threatened from the southeast, bringing rain and wind. With the uneven conditions of sidewalks, I joined the visiting tourists in wearing comfortable rubber thongs.

While roaming, I met former student Nikka who now works at Kanoa Resort, a few inches taller than she was when she sat in my sixth grade class at SVES. Mary Deala was a teeny-bopper when I left, now in Tony Stearns' clinic reception desk. She and Judith located my spondylosis diagnosis. Dr. Stearns is a walking example of physical fitness that he promotes.

Jun at Volcano's Bar tried to help locate a friend from Sichuan. I was not able to locate her as the one with similar physical attributes and *nom-la-nuit* turned out to be from Pea Eye rather than the foothills of the Himalayas. Deedee whose magical fingers and kneading once relieved me of body aches was nicely coiffed, selling cosmetics at the Galleria. Joe Hill, one of our prominent lawyers, munched his French fries at a fast food service by Beach Road. We exchanged friendly greetings; of my age, he chuckled at my article on retire and re-tire.

Another acquaintance, originally from Jilin in Manchuria, who left her countryside home and took on the only trade she could make at a tender age of 14, moved her assets to Saipan at 17 to the lucrative business of leasing out her fleshy charms by the hour. At 20, our *muer* (girl, female, woman in *Putunghua*) wanted to avail of a green card by entering into a *jia* (fake) marriage with a Chamorro gentleman who let her pay for the cost of USCIS processing plus occasionally enjoying the pleasures of her embrace. USCIS denied the petition, dubbing the application as not bona-fide wedded-ness. Divorced, she entered into real matrimony and moved in with the guy, who suffers from a terminal case of cancer. She cares for him and also staffs his fish stand, and that's how I caught up with her on this visit. Unfortunately, with her USCIS record, the second petition was also denied. An appeal is on its way, probably hopeless.

Lawyer friends Maya and Bruce over lunch related similar cases with immigration before and after the feds took over. The duo gave knowing grins of approval at a new addition to the island's USCIS staff. Two mothers, one at a restaurant and the other at a hotel, greeted me by name, reminding me that I was their child's teacher at 6th grade. The folks at NMPASI have been comrade-in-arms among the differently-abled. I mention all these names to remind me that I may not have been too successful in my paper work closures, but I sure ran into many of my old friends and acquaintances.

By **JAIME VERGARA**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.



As for Saipan itself, with the amount of rain that drenches Saipan, I was surprised that not more houses and buildings were equipped with rain catchment systems. I kept nine three-foot tall empty plastic containers lined and connected to each other in Majuro, retaining the rain from the roof. The water filtered itself from one container to the other, and by the time it got to the ninth can, it's contents poured into my kitchen tub where I processed the cooking and drinking waters.

Reverse osmosis on sea and ground water has made the 5-gallon bottle ubiquitous on Saipan. The 330 ml bottle, which visiting tourists patronize, easily costs a buck at the mom-and-pop stores. Tap water is a major municipal concern. It is time to design ways to hold, or, perhaps, filter, the fresh water in Lake Susupe, or build a reservoir up Mt. Tapochao.

The other obvious need where innovation and creativity can be gained is energy and power. To see the wind turbines spinning at Garapan Elementary School delighted us. Generating power is one of those that uses strategic planning, plotting operating vision down to practical implementation. The islands are blessed with solar and wind energy it can harness. Most immediately, architectural innovations can use passive solar energy and rain catchment. We can appropriate known technologies of making photovoltaic cells to catch and convert rays into stored power for lights, air-conditioning, or heating water. Wind turbines serve many functions.

We can get sophisticated with tidal turbines along the shores, or use the temperature differences of ocean depth at the Marianas Trench. The Marianas can be a research center to some of these technologies if we can get the local government and the feds to agree on the endeavors, or at least stop squabbling as if they belonged to separate teams. Heavy water (hydrogen) might even be sitting at the bottom of the Trench, a clean source of energy.

There's also *kaong* palms, the ornamental plants on island. They are a biofuel source.

We are islands in the sun. We can be an idyllic location full of technological innovations, if we so choose. Why don't we?

Bien kompliaños Nan-Nena`

I matriatkan familia as Nan Nena` Pablo (Ana Lian Igitol) ha selebra sien años kompliañosña gi mapos na Lunes. Sumen namagof na selebrasion gi dinaña famaguoña pot un` sumen espesiati na okasion.

Si Nan Nena` i pumogsai mañainan mame deste as defunta Nan Kita` Daddy (Maria S. Reyes) esta i mas patgon gi famaguon biuhu Elias P. Sablan.

Tai malefaghu `an Dameño `an in` bisita kattan Tanapag gi gima` niha. Ha tutuhon pa`gu mamatinas para i tropa dispues ti-natiye ni grasiosu siha na konbetsasion familia. Man-mañge` na linemug sunen agaga`, lemai, tininon yan makadun niyog na tinala` guihan, yan otru siha putahe.

Bula estorian antes yan dispues de gera kontodu tinituhon natibu `nai kayada asun bala siha guine. Ha bira siha i tautau tatte gi gualu` ya sige ma-usune prebension familia.

Sessu teña umakilili` yan asaguaña as Tun Pablo ya umega` i dos bola giya Susupe. Gi biradan para kattan gi gima`, sumugu` manbisita as Tatan Elias.

Un` matriatkan famiia ni motmut bendision yan pinasensia. Mampos na` humidde na saina yan sumen na`magof grasiosan mataña. In` kuenta de mañeluhu, si Yuus Maase` Nan Nena` pot todú i konkariñu yan ayudumu antes. Un` dañkulu na kongrayula-sion gi sien años na kompliañosmu!

Krineansan Guma` Poble

Lamegai gi man-cha-idathu man-dañkulun guma` poble. Ayu na tiempo `nai hasan cho`chu` gi hiniyuñg i Navy. Poresu na megai fumalague i gualu yan benefisiun tasi.

Gi ayu na eskalera, malulog hau man-aligau mantension familia deste gualu`, tasi yan sabana. Ayu siha na lugat `nai machuda` ma-sahalom-mu deste heg-su` sabana papa` esta i kantu yan halom tasi.

Kulan mohon un` plaset finaposmu `nai ma-imprinta lastromu yan `nai añglu` poduñg masahalom matamu. Estague` mina` gua-

guan este siha na tanu` kumu sagradu na lugat espiritumu kumu lahen natibu.

Ai na mattiru deste chagchag oga`an `an intutuhon umutut papa` i mandañkulun tañgantañgan, dimonta dispues in` hale`. Dispues de `nos kuantos dias, in tutuhon kumuha i tanu` para sune, kamute, nika, dagu, difirientes klasen choda, gulusina yan golai.

Taya` problema amotsan talo`ane sa` bula umañg yan ayuyu gi oriya. Tagpochau i mas paire na lugat umañg pot fininas ni hilitai gi mapos na 30 años. Teña pa`gu in` tinu ya in` pesun mantikan abune`ña gi hilu` hinegsa` `sino fina` saibog.

Gi biradan para i gima` tat sensin tatautaumu ti fatigau ni todú dia na afulu` yan machete, kuha, kama`, fusiñus yan bareta`. Gigon monhayan i sena ya umasun hau un` ratu ha` maliñgu maigo`mu ni yinayasmu. Todú kinalamten famiia pot famiia gi tiempon ha`ilas. Poresu, na maseha ta totpe pa`gu linala` miseraple, hu komprende koyenturaña este na finapos.

Memegaiña giya hita (62 dos años para mona) man-ginen en-nau na sabanita `nai appenas antes appottunibat prosperu na modun linala`. Mansuetten famaguon na tiempu!

Otru siha asunto-ta

I pattidan republican ha fafana` te`ug na chinatsaga. Monhayan ha akseptá haye para kandidatuña dispues guaha muna` halom kattan intension.

Monhayan masañgane gine gobietnu as Juan N. Babauta na gai disision esta i pattida ya maulegña u tatte si Iku mañapotta.

Ilegña si Babauta para u falagu ha` kumu republican de hemunos kau guaha pat taya` praimere. Para u nañgga gachoñgña antes de u guaha offisiat posision malagnos publikamente.

Abarambau tanu` republican `an ti masatba este na chinatsaga.

■■■

Sige kabayerus machukan amakan niha, mapepesa haf` mohon guaha gi kañadan i señgsoñg `nai man-mamatinas fatsu na promesa

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.



siha. Dididi` kulan man-fugun maneñgheñg. Sige makonsidera kau malañgag otru dinage. Ti mapot na kuentas in` fafana`: Ti nigap `nai man-mafañagu ham ni botadot! Haf` mohon, lai?

■■■

Ilegña i amiguha Magoo na para u dagau halom lokue` tu`ayaña. Hu ñañgon na dinanche planuña. Dispues, sige ha estotbayu` pot planu.

Huna` lapbla tatte na `an ha dagau halom tu`ayaña, pues kumeke ilegña na ti malalago-gue`. `An ha tira halom tihofñgña gi ridondu, ayu `nai fotmat planuña. I babahu ha` hasasañgan. Dios mihu ihu!

■■■

Para i mayamag na pisun ekonomia `nai kada unu konsukuat hinanauña, guaha mohon chansa para ta aregla i mas ke trenta años na diskuidu yan destrosiu? Estague` un` diskonsuelu gi megai na tautau-ta ni uma`atan i gueku na futtunan famaguon niha pa`gu. Puti na sentimiento lau taya` otrú remediú i para ta amot i man-sabiu ni futtunan famaguon-ta ya hita ta aregla.

■■■

I planun militat humalom giya Marianas ti umahñau. Hafa malago`ña siempre ha chule`. Tat mas ya hululu` i seguridat (security) nasion. Este na puntu makat ta kontra. Mauleg ta pasensiaye i asunto pot benefisiun komunidan iya Tinian, Saipan yan Pagan. Libiañu man-mapega hit gi lugat-ta pot asuntun *U.S. sovereignty* gi enteru elmundu.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Colorado gets \$98M; CNMI gets more casino BS

I summarized the article below so voters can see for themselves:

DENVER (AP)—Colorado’s legal marijuana market is far exceeding tax expectations, according to a budget proposal released Wednesday by Gov. John Hickenlooper that gives the first official estimate of how much the state expects to make from pot taxes. The proposal outlines plans to spend some \$99 million next fiscal year on substance abuse prevention, youth marijuana use prevention, and other priorities. The money would come from a statewide 12.9 percent sales tax on recreational pot. Colorado’s total pot sales next fiscal year was estimated to be about \$610 million.

The governor predicted sales and excise taxes next fiscal year would produce some \$98 million, well above a \$70 million annual estimate given to voters when they approved the pot taxes last year. The governor also includes taxes from medical pot, which are subject only to the statewide 2.9 percent sales tax. Hickenlooper’s proposal listed six priorities for spending the pot sales taxes. The spending plan included \$45.5 million for youth use prevention, \$40.4 million for substance abuse treatment and \$12.4 million for public health.

“We view our top priority as creating an environment where negative impacts on children from marijuana legalization are avoided completely,” Hickenlooper wrote in a letter to legislative budget writers, which must approve the plan. The governor also proposed a \$5.8 million, three-year “statewide media campaign on marijuana use,” presumably highlighting the drug’s health risks. The state Department of Transportation would get \$1.9 million for a new “Drive High, Get a DUI” campaign to tout the state’s new marijuana blood-limit standard for drivers.

“This package represents a strong yet cautious first step” for regulating pot, the governor wrote.

Mason Tvert, a legalization activist who ran Colorado’s 2012 campaign, said other states are watching closely to see what legal weed can produce in tax revenue. “Voters and state lawmakers around the country are watching how this system unfolds in Colorado, and the prospect of generating significant revenue while eliminating the underground marijuana market is increasingly appealing,” said Tvert, who now works for the Marijuana Policy Project.

Meanwhile, *The Denver Post* reported Wednesday that banks holding commercial loans on properties that lease to Colorado marijuana businesses say they don’t plan to refinance those loans when they come due. Bankers say property used as collateral for those loans theoretically is subject to federal drug-seizure laws, which makes the loans a risk.

Colorado has proved the only drawback to legalizing it were the bank loans and we don’t even have that worry as the cultivation for public sales will be done on government-sponsored land for growers in the form of farm lots and we have CDA to help start up cultivation businesses. The feds would also catch hell trying to take land from the CNMI government anyway. Voters, we have been waiting on something to fix our economy and this is truly a heaven-sent solution in the form of a natural herb. Colorado almost equaled the CNMI’s yearly budget in their first year’s collection from marijuana taxes alone, meaning we may be able to double or triple our budget in the first year. The time is now to *carpe diem* as we are talking of hundreds of millions. Colorado is estimated to earn over \$610 million next year but our governor and his followers continue to disrespect the NO decision and want us to settle for their casinos BS.

P.S.: I just happen to believe in that old American saying that one

A futile act

As much as I want to respond to certain comments made directly at me, which were less than accurate, by ghostwriters, it is hard to accurately address it to a specific person when the identity of the writer is not known, as they hide in the dark and remain anonymous. To do so is a futile act.

While I do not hold a monopoly on public opinion, engaging in meaningful and honest discussions on issues affecting our lives is healthily required and encouraged. A disagreement over any given matter is a “natural state of event.” However, when one engages in name-calling or “obstruct” labeling with the intent to cast aspersion on someone’s character simply to score political points, that is certainly not a “natural state of event.” That leans more toward malice or injurious intent.

I will continue to express my opinions and state my position on

Educational reality

Everything Timothy Wilson said in his March 5 letter to the editor is happening because we are stuck in the 19th century as far as educational teaching methods and teaching with technology is concerned. YouTube has thousands of videos on what can and is being done to bring educational systems into the 21st century, and Finland is the world’s leader in innovation and results, but I haven’t found a single person in Hawaii, Guam, or Saipan that has taken the time to look into it. Not one! What little technology that is available is not being utilized at all in a meaningful way.

Again, YouTube has it all laid out in easy-to-understand videos that even a teacher can understand. But wait, surprise, surprise, YouTube is blocked in every school in Hawaii, Guam, and Saipan. The single greatest repository of information and knowledge ever

person can make a difference and if Mason Tvert, a legalization activist for Colorado, can lead change that’s bringing in hundreds of millions for his state, then I am willing to do it for the CNMI since our leaders are acting dumbfounded. Don’t believe the casino BS if retirees really want your 25 percent and those who want our economy to fully recover. Call everyone that you can in the Legislature and let them know you want them to Legalize It, as they obviously need a push from the people. We the people must start a Power to the People Movement if there is going to be any hope of legalizing pot and fully restoring our economy. Not everyone reads the paper so pass the good news on and tell a friend to tell another friend to sign the initiative and vote to pass it in November. If you want to help with the signature drive for the initiative please call me, I’m in the book.

Ambrose M Bennett

Kagman, Saipan

issues that matters dearly to people of Northern Marianas descent. This is not only my responsibility as an officer of the Northern Marianas Descent Corp. but a moral obligation. As an advocate of such group, I never claimed to be “holier than thou” or exhibited an attitude of superior virtue or self-righteously pious. On the contrary, I am just as real as any other individuals on the street. I do make mistakes and made a number of them. I’ve made bad judgments in my lifetime that I am not proud of but have and will never sacrifice the honor and dignity of another person for my selfish advancement or purpose. I have personal imperfections but lack of respect is not one of them.

Daniel O. Quitugua

Kannat Tabla, Saipan

assembled on the planet is unavailable to our students. Today’s kids can get around the block, of course, but without teachers using YouTube for learning, it doesn’t make any difference whether it’s blocked or not. Our kids need a challenge and touch screen tablets, the Internet, and YouTube can keep them engaged and interested in this 21st century. Just YouTube “education in Finland” and “technology in the classroom” and be sure to filter by upload date and only watch videos not more than a year old.

Here is a 5 minute video that highlights Finland’s system: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6jJy-lmoWA>.






Gary Dubrall

Chalan Piao, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. North winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲86° ▼75°	▲87° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼76
Palau	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼75
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲87 ▼76
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲84 ▼79
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼77
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	▲85 ▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲86 ▼80

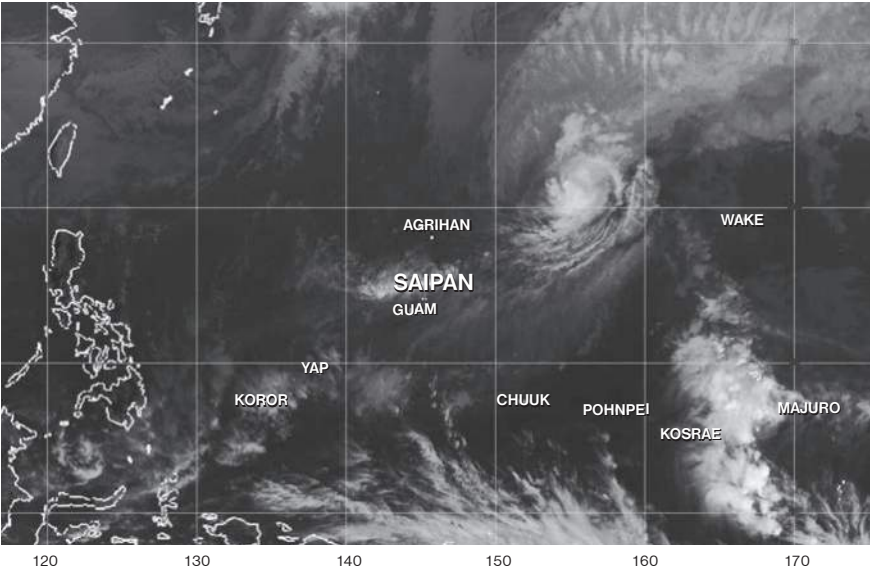
Around The Globe

Auckland	Sunny	▲71 ▼60
Beijing	Sunny	▲48 ▼26
Hong Kong	Cloudy	▲68 ▼64
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲79 ▼69
London	Partly Cloudy	▲58 ▼48
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲73 ▼56
Manila	Partly Cloudy	▲86 ▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲70 ▼53
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲82 ▼69
New York	Partly Cloudy	▲38 ▼22
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲47 ▼36
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲58 ▼34
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲48 ▼29
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲62 ▼42
Salem	Rain	▲58 ▼50
San Francisco	Cloudy	▲64 ▼54
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲43 ▼24
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲49 ▼34
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲42 ▼25

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
5:09 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet
10:48 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
5:54 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Typhoon Faxai (03W) is centered about 620 miles northeast of Saipan near 21N153E with maximum sustained winds of 85 mph and moving northeastward at 20 mph. Heavy rain and scattered thunderstorms are occurring near the center within 90 miles of a line from 19N152E to 21N155E. For more information on Typhoon Faxai, see advisories issued by the National Weather Service under WMO header WTPQ31 PGUM and bulletins issued by the Joint Typhoon Warning Center under WMO header WTPN31 PGTW. A surface trough reaches east-northeastward from Faxai beyond 25N at 161E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are seen near Minami Tori Shima north of a line from 20N150E to 24N160E to 25N170E. Converging surface winds are generating scattered showers near Yap within 100 miles of a line from 9N138E to 8N148E. Converging surface winds are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms near Kwajalein and Enewetak atolls to southeast of Kosrae within 130 miles of a line from 14N164E to 7N167E to EQ167E. An old shear line runs westward from near 10N180 to end north of Kwajalein at 11N167E. Patchy clouds and showers are evident along and up to 220 miles north of this boundary.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:31 AM	6:25 PM
Friday	6:31 AM	6:26 PM
Saturday	6:30 AM	6:26 PM
Sunday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM
Monday	6:29 AM	6:26 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	10:01 AM	11:02 PM
Friday	10:49 AM	11:54 PM
Saturday	11:37 AM	
Sunday	12:26 PM	12:45 AM
Monday	1:14 PM	1:33 AM

Note: Blank spaces indicate that a rising or a setting did not occur during that 24-hour interval.

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 25, 2014

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5039 1:35pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5038 12:10pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6 via Rota UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-OSAKA (KIX) OZ119 4:00am 6:40am Daily	OSAKA (KIX)-SAIPAN OZ120 9:50pm 2:20am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:00am 8:40am Daily DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 Daily
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 (will increase eff Jan 29) OZ104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN OZ101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily OZ103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6 (will increase eff Jan 29)
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:00am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:20pm 3:00am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/473 6:00am 10:55pm Daily via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:30pm 5 via Guam UA5039/183 1:35pm 9:50pm 1, 4, 7 via Guam UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:45am 1:30am+1 Daily via NRT UA190/5077 9:55am 5:35pm 2, 7 via Guam UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
SAIPAN-TIANJIN (TSN) D2884 10:45am 2:45pm Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24	TIANJIN (TSN)-SAIPAN D2885 4:45pm 12:20am+1 Jan 25, 30, Feb 4, 9, 14, 24
SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH) D2880 4:30pm 8:00pm Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27	HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN D2881 10:00pm 5:15am+1 Jan 28, Feb 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27
SAIPAN-WUHAN (WUH) D2882 11:00am 3:15pm Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26	WUHAN (WUH)-SAIPAN D2883 5:15pm 12:20am+1 Jan 27, Feb 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 1750	17:50	18:20	Daily	Tinian-Saipan			
Saipan-Rota				FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Business

Carry-on crackdown: United enforces bag size limit

NEW YORK (AP)—United Airlines is getting tough on passengers with oversized carry-on bags, even sending some of them back to the ticket counter to check their luggage for a fee.

The Chicago-based airline has started a push to better enforce rules restricting the size of carry-on bags—an effort that will include instructing workers at security checkpoint entrances to eyeball passengers for bags that are too big.

In recent weeks, United has rolled out new bag-sizing boxes at most airports and sent an email to frequent fliers, reminding them of the rules. An internal employee newsletter called the program a “renewed focus on carry-on compliance.”

The size limits on carry-on bags have been in place for years, but airlines have enforced them inconsistently, rarely conducting anything beyond occasional spot checks.

United says its new approach will ensure that bags are reliably reviewed at the security checkpoint, in addition to the bag

checks already done at gates prior to boarding.

Passengers are typically allowed one carry-on bag to fit in the overhead bin, which can be no larger than 9 inches by 14 inches by 22 inches. Fliers can also bring one personal item such as a purse or laptop bag that fits under the seat in front of them.

People flying with oversized bags can have the suitcase checked for free at the gate, a longstanding practice. But those who get halted at the entrance to security must now go back to the ticket counter and pay the airline’s \$25 checked-luggage fee.

Some travelers suggest the crackdown is part of a larger attempt by United to collect more fees. The airline says it’s simply ensuring that compliant passengers have space left for them in the overhead bins. In recent years, the last passengers to board have routinely been forced to check their bags at the gate because overhead bins were already full.

“The stepped-up enforcement is to address the customers who complained about having bags within the size limit and weren’t able to take them on the plane,” United spokesman Rahsaan Johnson said. “That is solely what this is about.”

It has nothing to do with revenue, Johnson said, adding that one non-compliant bag takes up the same space as two compliant ones.

But the airline is likely to benefit financially if more passengers are turned back at security.

“This new program is primarily to drive new revenue and will likely delay the boarding process even more unless better education is provided around what is and is not acceptable,” said Brian Kelly, an industry watcher who writes about flying trends at ThePointsGuy.com.

But, he added, having fewer bags on board could also be good for passengers.

“I’ve been whacked more times than I can count by people loaded down with their life’s worldly possessions,” Kelly said.

China premier promises to advance economy reforms

BEIJING (AP)—China’s government promised sweeping reforms Wednesday to promote sustainable growth in its slowing economy by opening state-dominated industries to private investment, making its banks more market-oriented and encouraging consumer spending.

In his first annual policy speech as China’s top economic official, Premier Li Keqiang said Beijing will encourage competition, ease exchange rate controls and improve access to credit for productive businesses.

Li’s pledges were in line with Communist Party plans issued in November that call for promoting market forces and domestic consumption to replace a model based on exports and investment that delivered three decades of explosive growth but has run out of steam.

“We need to make sure the

market plays a decisive role,” said Li in a nationally televised speech to China’s ceremonial legislature. He promised to “break mental shackles and vested interests”—a reference to possible resistance from state companies that might lose subsidies and monopolies.

Entrepreneurs and investors are watching the annual meeting of the National People’s Congress for details of how the party will carry out its November pledge. Beijing has issued a flurry of minor changes such as simplifying processes for registering new businesses but has yet to take action on major tasks such as overhauling the state-run banking system.

Despite pledges of reform, the ruling party made clear the limits to possible change in its November plan by declaring that state ownership will remain the core of the economy.

The changes come as the ruling party tries to steer China to cleaner, more energy-efficient growth based on service industries and technology following the past decade’s blistering expansion.

Growth last year tumbled to a two-decade low of 7.7 percent, due largely to government curbs imposed to cool a lending and investment boom. It was barely half of 2007’s explosive 14.2 percent rate.

Li announced an official growth target of 7.5 percent for this year. That was unchanged from last year’s target and in line with growth forecasts by the International Monetary Fund and private sector analysts.

Li promised an array of changes in banking and finance that reform advocates say are essential to making the economy more efficient and productive.

Nation

Republican group shows support for gay marriage

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—

A group of Republicans has come out in support of legalizing gay marriage in Utah and Oklahoma, arguing that allowing same-sex unions is consistent with the Western conservative values of freedom and liberty once championed by Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater.

Led by former Sen. Alan Simpson of Wyoming and former Sen. Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, 20 Republicans signed a friend of the court brief submitted Tuesday to a federal appeals court in Denver that is reviewing same-sex marriage bans in Utah and Oklahoma.

The list also includes former New Mexico Gov. Gary Johnson, former Republican National Committee chairman Kenneth Mehlman and several state legislators from Wyoming and Colorado. Melhman came out as gay in 2010 and has worked to bring together Republicans willing to step forward in support of gay marriage.

Denver attorney Sean Gallagher, whose firm wrote the 30-page argument, said the filing shows that many prominent Republicans are re-examining



AP

In this Sept. 12, 2011 file photo, Alan Simpson, speaks in Washington, D.C. A group of Republicans have come out in support of legalizing gay marriage in Utah and Oklahoma, arguing that allowing same-sex unions is consistent with the Western conservative values of freedom and liberty once championed by Ronald Reagan and Barry Goldwater.

their stance on gay marriage.

The group call themselves “conservatives, moderates and libertarians who embrace the individual freedoms protected by our Constitution,” embrace Reagan’s idea of the Republican Party being a “big tent,” and share Goldwater’s belief that the party shouldn’t “seek to lead anyone’s life for him,” the brief says.

“It is precisely because marriage is so important in producing and protecting strong and

stable family structures that (we) do not agree that the government can rationally promote the goal of strengthening families by denying civil marriage to same-sex couples,” the argument says in the conclusion.

Washington, D.C., and 17 states, mostly in the Northeast, allow same-sex marriage. Others may soon follow depending on how federal appeals courts, and eventually the U.S. Supreme Court, rule on state bans that have been overturned.

White House: Jobless rate over 6 percent ‘til 2017

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama’s \$3.9 trillion budget proposal for next year suggests the U.S. economic recovery that began in 2009 will continue to gain momentum over the next few years but that the unemployment rate won’t fall to pre-recession levels of below 6 percent until 2017.

The White House forecast that the budget deficit would fall from \$649 billion in the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30 to \$564 billion in fiscal 2015 and \$458 billion in 2017. If the projections hold up, it would mark three years in a row of annual red ink below \$1 trillion.

The unemployment rate,

which was 6.6 per cent in January, will continue to slowly decline over the next five years, stabilizing at 5.4 percent by 2018, the administration projected. That’s down from a high of 10 percent reached during the 2008-2009 recession.

The economic forecasts, included in the president’s budget proposal for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, are generally in line with projections made by other government and private forecasters.

However, the White House projects a 6.7 percent unemployment rate for 2015. While that’s the same level as in the Blue Chip Consensus—an average of about 50

private-sector forecasts—it is more optimistic than the Congressional Budget Office, which projects 2015 unemployment at 7.1 percent.

The administration forecast is based on assumed congressional approval of all of Obama’s budget tax and spending proposals, an unlikely prospect.

The most recent unemployment rate available is January’s 6.6 percent. That’s getting close to the 6.5 percent threshold the Federal Reserve suggested might be the point at which it would back away from its policy of keeping short-term interest rates at near zero.

Prosecutor in Army sex case wanted charges dropped

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP)—Less than a month before an Army general’s trial on sexual assault charges, the lead prosecutor broke down in tears as he told a superior he believed the primary accuser in the case had lied under oath.

Lt. Col. William Helixon had urged that the most serious charges against Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. Sinclair be dropped because they rely solely on the woman’s accusation that he twice forced her to perform oral sex.

But those above the seasoned sex crimes prosecutor overrode him, rebuffing an

offer from Sinclair to plead guilty to lesser charges.

Defense attorneys allege the top brass moved forward because they were worried about the political fallout that would result if the charges were dropped.

Helixon was pulled from the case after leading it for nearly two years, after a superior officer took him to a military hospital for a mental health evaluation, according to testimony.

Following a daylong hearing, a judge ruled the case should go to trial. Opening statements are set for Thursday.

“No offense to Lt. Col. He-

lixon, but I don’t care what he thinks and neither should the court,” Lt. Col. Robert Stelle, who replaced Helixon as lead prosecutor, told the judge.

The case against Sinclair, believed to be the most senior member of the U.S. military ever to face trial for sexual assault, comes as the Pentagon grapples with a troubling string of revelations involving rape and sexual misconduct within the ranks. Influential members of Congress are also pushing to remove decisions about the prosecution of sex crimes from the military chain of command.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Latino group leader: Obama is ‘deporter in chief’

WASHINGTON (AP)—The president of a prominent Latino advocacy group called President Barack Obama the “deporter in chief,” denouncing the administration’s deportation of nearly 2 million immigrants. Janet Murguía, who heads the National Council of La Raza, also directed her anger and frustration at House Republicans for stalling on immigration legislation, which is languishing some eight months after the Senate passed a bipartisan, comprehensive bill. Murguía made the comments at an awards dinner Tuesday night. “For us, this president has been the deporter in chief,” Murguía said. “Any day now, this administration will reach the 2 million mark for deportations. It is a staggering number that far outstrips any of his predecessors and leaves behind it a wake of devastation for families across America.”

Dish, Disney deal envisions Internet-delivered TV

LOS ANGELES (AP)—With a string of recent deals, cable and satellite providers are beginning to acknowledge a brutal truth that companies like Hulu and Netflix have known all along: Many TV viewers, especially young ones, want shows and movies on their own terms—wherever, whenever and on whatever devices they choose. Dish Network took a big step toward such a future with a deal announced Monday with Disney. The agreement opens the way for the satellite TV service to live-stream Disney-owned channels like ESPN and ABC over the Internet to customers’ smartphones, tablets, video game consoles and other devices. The goal is to attract so-called cord-cutters who have become disenchanted with large channel packages and rising monthly bills for cable or satellite service.



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Asia

China govt vows to address stifling smog, terror threat

BEIJING (AP)—China's government vowed to address long-festering complaints about choking smog while promising to crack down harder on the new threat of terrorism and promote unity among the country's sometimes-restive ethnic minorities.

In his first annual policy speech, Premier Li Keqiang also pledged to move more people into the middle class, cut government waste and push further with President Xi Jinping's signature campaign to fight the rampant official corruption that has undermined public faith in the Communist Party.

Li's speech at Wednesday's opening of China's annual ceremonial legislature comes as the government confronts ethnic unrest in the far western region of Xinjiang that has intensified over the past year. On Saturday, China saw the first big terror attack outside Xinjiang blamed on militants from that region—a slashing attack at a train station in Kunming that killed 29 people and wounded 143.

In Beijing, the meeting's nearly 3,000 delegates from across the country observed a moment of silence for the victims of the attack as the session opened.

Li briefly mentioned Saturday's attack in his speech, saying authorities would toughen its controls on public order and "crack down hard on violent crimes of terrorism."

Chen Fengxiang, a delegate from Hubei, said during the session that the government would adopt stronger security steps following the attack by assailants wielding large knives.

"They lost their senses, and we must crack down harshly and take strict measures in preventing the violence," Chen said.

Much of Li's report served to further define priorities that had been outlined after a party policy meeting in November, which included plans to make the world's second-largest economy more open and competitive.

Li announced an official growth target of 7.5 percent for this year and pledged that Beijing will encourage competition, ease exchange rate controls and improve access to credit for productive businesses. Last year, the economy grew 7.7 percent.

Li said the government will work harder to reduce pollution by shutting more coal-fired furnaces and controlling the tainting of rivers. He referred to the stifling smog that creeps over increasing areas of China and the fouling of the country's air, water and soil as "nature's red-light warning against the model of inefficient and blind development."

Li promised to cut government waste, reiterating earlier decisions to ban the building of new government offices and reduce the number of government employees. He said the administration would try to be more responsive to the people's concerns and penalize corrupt officials "without mercy."

Outside the Great Hall of the People where security was tight, two middle-aged would-be protesters broke through a police cordon and ran onto Tiananmen Square. One of them threw leaflets into the air before paramilitary police dragged them off the square.

Li emphasized that China's many ethnic groups were all "equal members of the Chinese nation," an indirect response to frequent complaints by minority Uighurs and Tibetans that they are discriminated against for jobs, passports and bank loans and unfairly sub-

ject to intense surveillance.

The work report did not indicate any intention on the government's part to review its ethnic policies in Xinjiang and Tibet. Critics say Beijing's policies of encouraging the migration of majority Han and imposing restrictions on religion and language have fueled the recent years' unrest.

The government also released details on its budget, announcing a 12.2 percent increase in military spending to \$132 billion. That followed last year's 10.7 percent increase to \$114 billion, giving China the second-highest defense budget for any nation behind the U.S., which spent \$600.4 billion on its military last year.

Increases in China's military budget have regularly exceeded both total increases in government spending and the nation's rate of economic growth. That has allowed lavish spending on new hardware and better conditions for soldiers, raising concerns about how China intends to use its new-found power amid a rise in tensions with its neighbors over the country's territorial claims.

In particular, there's been a sharp increase in friction between China and Japan in the past 18 months over control of a string of tiny uninhabited islands in the East China Sea.

While becoming increasingly assertive in its own territorial claims, Beijing has at the same time accused Japan of renewed militarism while dwelling on Tokyo's history as an aggressor during World War II.

"We will safeguard the victory of World War II and the postwar international order, and will not allow anyone to reverse the course of history," Li said, in an obvious dig at Tokyo.

World

Putin talks tough but cools tensions over Ukraine

MOSCOW (AP)—Stepping back from the brink of war, Vladimir Putin talked tough but cooled tensions in the Ukraine crisis Tuesday, saying Russia has no intention "to fight the Ukrainian people" but reserves the right to use force.

As the Russian president held court in his personal residence, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry met with Kiev's fledgling government and urged Putin to stand down.

"It is not appropriate to invade a country, and at the end of a barrel of a gun dictate what you are trying to achieve," Kerry said. "That is not 21st-century, G-8, major nation behavior."

Although nerves remained on edge in the Crimean Peninsula, with Russian troops firing warning shots to ward off Ukrainian soldiers, global markets jumped higher on tentative signals that the Kremlin was not seeking to escalate the conflict. Kerry brought moral support and a \$1 billion aid package to a Ukraine fighting to fend off bankruptcy.

Lounging in an arm-chair before Russian tricolor flags, Putin made his first public comments since the Ukrainian president fled a week and a half ago. It was a signature Putin performance, filled with earthy language, macho swagger and sarcastic jibes, accusing the West of promoting an "unconstitutional coup" in Ukraine. At one point he compared the U.S. role to an experiment with "lab rats."

But the overall message appeared to be one of de-escalation. "It seems to me (Ukraine) is gradually stabilizing," Putin said. "We have no enemies in Ukraine. Ukraine is a friendly state."

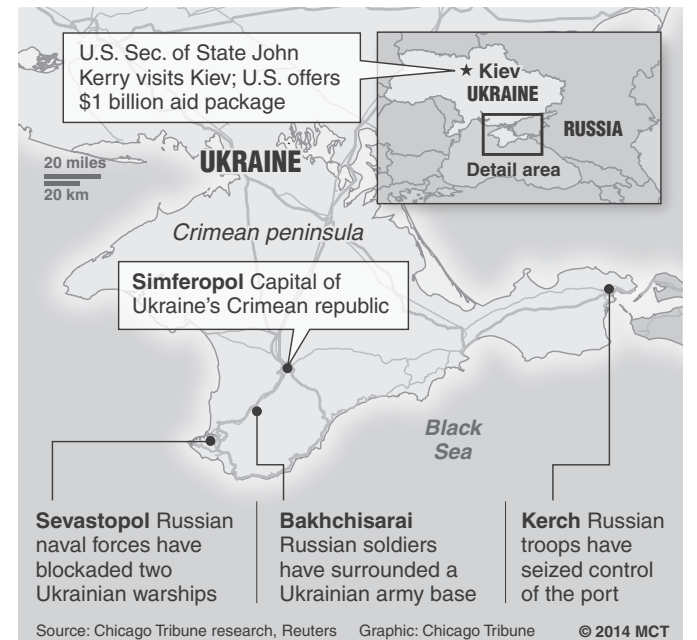
Still, he tempered those comments by warning that Russia was willing to use "all means at our disposal" to protect ethnic Russians in the country.

Significantly, Russia agreed to a NATO request to hold a special meeting to discuss Ukraine on Wednesday in Brussels, opening up a possible diplomatic channel in a conflict that still holds monumental hazards and uncertainties. At the same time, the U.S. and 14 other nations formed a military observer mission to monitor the tense Crimea region, and the team was headed there in 24 hours.

While the threat of military confrontation retreated somewhat, both sides ramped up economic feuding. Russia hit its nearly broke neighbor with a termination of discounts on

In control of Crimea

Ukraine's interim government say 16,000 Russian troops are now deployed across Crimea, surrounding Ukrainian army bases and seizing a Ukrainian port city. President Vladimir Putin says Russia has the right to "take all measures" in Ukraine.



natural gas, while the U.S. announced a \$1 billion aid package in energy subsidies to Ukraine.

"We are going to do our best. We are going to try very hard," Kerry said upon arriving in Kiev. "We hope Russia will respect the election that you are going to have."

Kerry also made a pointed distinction between the Ukrainian government and Putin's.

"The contrast really could not be clearer: determined Ukrainians demonstrating strength through unity, and the Russian government out of excuses, hiding its hand behind falsehoods, intimidation and provocations. In the hearts of Ukrainians and the eyes of the world, there is nothing strong about what Russia is doing."

The penalties proposed against Russia, he added, are "not something we are seeking to do. It is something Russia is pushing us to do."

World markets, which slumped the previous day, clawed back a large chunk of their losses on signs that Russia was backpedaling. Gold, the Japanese yen and U.S. treasuries - all seen as safe havens - returned some of their gains. Russia's RTS index, which fell 12 percent on Monday, rose 6.2 percent Tuesday. In the U.S., the Dow Jones industrial average closed up 1.4 percent.

"Confidence in equity markets has been restored as the standoff between Ukraine and Russia is no longer on red alert," said David Madden, market analyst at IG.

Russia took over the strategic Crimean Peninsula on Saturday, placing its troops around its ferry, military bases and border posts. Two Ukrainian warships remained anchored in the Crimean port of Sevastopol,

blocked from leaving by Russian ships.

"Those unknown people without insignia who have seized administrative buildings and airports ... what we are seeing is a kind of velvet invasion," said Russian military analyst Alexander Golts.

The territory's enduring volatility was put in stark relief Tuesday morning: Russian troops, who had taken control of the Belbek air base, fired warning shots into the air as some 300 Ukrainian soldiers, who previously manned the airfield, demanded their jobs back.

As the Ukrainians marched unarmed toward the base, about a dozen Russian soldiers told them not to approach, then fired several shots into the air and said they would shoot the Ukrainians if they continued toward them.

The Ukrainian troops vowed to hold whatever ground they had left on the Belbek base.

"We are worried, but we will not give up our base," said Capt. Nikolai Syomko, an air force radio electrician holding an AK-47.

Amid the tensions, the Russian military test-fired a Topol intercontinental ballistic missile. Fired from a launch pad in southern Russia, it hit a designated target on a range leased by Russia from Kazakhstan.

The new Ukrainian leadership in Kiev, which Putin does not recognize, has accused Moscow of a military invasion in Crimea, which the Russian leader denied.

Ukraine's prime minister expressed hope that a negotiated solution could be found. Arseniy Yatsenyuk told a news conference that both governments were gradually beginning to talk again.

ASIAN BRIEFS

10 killed, 17 injured in northeast China bus fire

BEIJING (AP)—A fire on a passenger bus in northeastern China killed at least 10 people and injured 17 on Wednesday, officials said, in the country's second deadly bus fire in less than a week. The fire broke out aboard a crowded bus in the city of Jilin early Wednesday morning as the vehicle neared a highway entrance, the provincial government said on its microblog. Reports said 43 people were aboard the bus at the time of the blaze. There was no immediate word on the cause of the fire, and police were investigating. Such blazes have been deliberately set in the past in China by passengers carrying grudges against people, the government or society.

India announces general elections to

start April 7

NEW DELHI (AP)—India says its general election will be held in several phases from April to May, with the largest election in the world kicking off April 7. More than 810 million people are eligible to vote. The Election Commission announced the dates Wednesday. The vote pits the incumbent Congress party against the opposition Hindu nationalist party, led by Narendra Modi. A recent poll by the Pew Research Center said 63 percent of Indians prefer Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party to lead the next government. India's Lok Sabha, or lower house of Parliament, has 543 elected seats. Any party or coalition needs at least 272 MPs to form a government. India holds staggered elections for logistical and security reasons. Hundreds of thousands of security forces are deployed during the polls.

Focus

BELBEK, Ukraine (AP)—For Ukrainian soldiers in Crimea, it's a bewildering time.

Surrounded by the Russian forces who took over much of their military air base in Crimea, some 300 Ukrainian troops made a peaceful attempt Tuesday to retake their airfield at Belbek.

They were driven back by a dozen or so Russian soldiers who fired warning shots into the air and said they would shoot if the Ukrainians did not turn back. To emphasize the point, sharpshooters took up positions to their left.

The marchers retreated.

"In normal life, we would not point guns at each other and would not shoot at each other," said Capt. Severin Vetsitsky, a 31-year-old Ukrainian air force engineer patrolling a different section of the Belbek base.

Russia's seizure of power in Crimea, a strategic Ukrainian peninsula in the Black Sea, has not gone as smoothly as Moscow may have expected. Ukrainian soldiers at Belbek and some other bases across Crimea have refused to hand over their weapons or switch allegiances, resulting in strange standoffs between armed men surprised to find themselves on opposing sides.

The turmoil in Crimea came after months of street demonstrations in Kiev, Ukraine's capital, drove out the Moscow-



Ukrainian officers march at the Belbek air base, outside Sevastopol, Ukraine, on Tuesday, March 4, 2014. Russian troops, who had taken control over Belbek airbase, fired warning shots in the air as around 300 Ukrainian officers marched towards them to demand their jobs back.

Ukrainians soldiers caught in the middle in Crimea

supported president and brought in a new government eager to turn away from Russia in favor of closer ties with the 28-nation European Union.

At the Belbek base, all that geopolitics turned local. The air base is near Sevastopol, where Russia has leased a port for its Black Sea Fleet since the 1991

breakup of the Soviet Union.

Vetsitsky was one of the officers on patrol Tuesday at the section of the Belbek compound still held by Ukrainians. He and his compatriots had gone three days with little sleep, not much information about what was going on in the outside world and no clear

orders from their commanders.

To signal their defiance, they hung a Ukrainian flag on the main gate of their compound, mostly barracks and offices. To gather information, they talked with relatives through the fence, staying alert for possible Russian troop movements.

"We are worried. But we will

not give up our base," said Capt. Nikolai Syomko, a 36-year-old air force radio electrician, holding an AK-47 and patrolling the back of the compound.

Syomko, who has spent 16 years in the Ukrainian air force, said troops at the base felt as if they were being held hostage, caught between Russia and

Ukraine. He said their relatives are extremely worried, especially his mother.

"But at the same time she told me 'You took an oath and you need to keep it until the end,'" he said.

Vetsitsky, part of the same guard unit, was watching the rear of their compound. Joking around, he smiled at a TV news camera. In broken English, he waved his fist in the air saying: "Ukraine forever!"

But that bravado was a mask. Vetsitsky said the members of his unit feel virtually alone.

"The orders are not clear," he said. "They (his commanders) don't know what they are supposed to do. But they still make demands of us, for us not to give up, and so on."

"But we are not surrendering. We are officers," he added.

In Moscow, Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday denied that the soldiers who have taken over Ukrainian military bases were Russian, saying they were self-defense forces loyal to Crimea's pro-Russian regional government.

The soldiers, however, had sophisticated weapons and used vehicles with Russian license plates.

Putin said Ukraine's 22,000-strong force in Crimea has dissolved, while the regional government claimed Tuesday that 5,500 Ukrainian soldiers had switched their allegiance from Kiev to them.

There was no way to immediately verify either claim.

US, EU push for Russia sanctions over Ukraine

BRUSSELS (AP)—The United States and the European Union are preparing economic and diplomatic sanctions against Russia unless Moscow deescalates the crisis in Ukraine and pulls its troops on the Crimean peninsula back to its barracks.

The U.S. has already halted military and economic talks as it weighs further punitive measures. Secretary of State John Kerry said Tuesday in Kiev that Russia must pull back or "our partners will have absolutely no choice but to join us to continue to expand upon steps we have taken in recent days in order to isolate Russia politically, diplomatically and economically."

The EU appears to be treading more cautiously, but the bloc's 28 leaders are set to decide on initial sanctions at an emergency meeting in Brussels Thursday.

Here's a glance on agreed sanctions, further measures under consideration in the U.S. and the EU and their impact:

STOP TALKING AND COOPERATING

The U.S. and the European

members of the G8—Germany, Britain, Italy and France—have halted all preparations for a planned June summit in Russia's Black Sea resort Sochi.

Washington has suspended talks with Russia on an economic agreement and the Pentagon has suspended exercises and other activities with the Russian military.

EU foreign ministers on Monday said their leaders are likely to halt long-running talks with Russia on visa liberalization and negotiations on further economic cooperation. Russia is keen on the talks to secure visa-free travel for its citizens to the 28-nation EU, the country's biggest trade partner.

But influential European officials such as German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier say not sanctions but even more talks with Russia and diplomacy are needed now to resolve the crisis.

ECONOMIC SANCTIONS

U.S. officials traveling with Kerry said the administration is considering imposing economic sanctions as soon as this week, but gave no details.

Ed Royce, chairman of

the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee, has called for "debilitating" economic measures. He said the U.S. and Europe should act collectively to threaten the Russian stock market, economy and ruble if Russia doesn't withdraw from Crimea.

The chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Bob Menendez, also said talks were ongoing with the administration on possible sanctions ranging from "visa bans and asset freezes, to the suspension of military cooperation and sales."

EU foreign ministers on Monday threatened Russia with "targeted measures," which typically include banning key officials and business leaders from traveling to the 28-nation bloc and freezing any of their assets held there. Some analysts speculate the EU could also hit Russia by blocking state-controlled banks' access to its financial market.

Such steps would be fairly easy to do, but could harm Europe's economic interest. Russian investors hold assets worth billions in European banks, not least in Britain and

Cyprus—two financial hubs popular with Russians.

Britain is especially protective of London's huge financial industry, and would be reluctant to take actions which undermine the sector just as the country is crawling out of recession. A British government document caught Monday by a camera outside the prime minister's office said Britain "should not support for now trade sanctions or close London's financial center to Russians," even though Foreign Secretary William Hague said Tuesday all options were still open.

STOP ENERGY IMPORTS

Tougher economic sanctions could target Russia's energy sector. The trade in oil and gas accounts for around 60 percent of Russia's exports and half of its government revenues, according to analysts from Capital Economics, making Moscow vulnerable to sanctions, at least in theory. It would be easy for the U.S., but very difficult and thus unlikely for the Europeans.

Russia is the EU's third-largest trading partner, mainly because of oil and gas imports, with the EU being its biggest

gas consumer. Germany, for example, gets 35 percent of its supplies from Russia.

Russia, in turn, buys everything from machinery to cars from Europe, its biggest trading partner, with exports to Russia totaling 123 billion euros (\$170 billion) in 2012. For the U.S., Russia isn't among the top 15 trading partners.

President Vladimir Putin "likely believes that the West would not be able to agree on biting economic sanctions against Russia; indeed, the EU nations have such deep trade relations with Russia that they would resist," said Eurasia Group analyst Cliff Kupchan.

However, when the political cost of cheap and steady energy supplies eventually outweighed the economic benefits, Europe in 2012 agreed to ban imports of gas and oil from Iran to pressure Tehran to come clear on its nuclear program.

HOW EASY TO ACT?

The United States is free to act on its own, though it obviously would prefer to build a united response from its allies.

Any tough EU decisions will require unanimity among the leaders of the bloc's 28 sovereign nations, and that appears far from guaranteed, for fears

of hurting their economies and being shut off from Russian gas supplies.

WHO WOULD BE MOST HURT BY SANCTIONS?

Both the U.S. and the EU would feel a pinch if they impose sanctions.

The fallout for Washington would likely be primarily political as it needs to work with Russia, a veto-wielding permanent U.N. Security Council member, on resolving international crises ranging from the civil war in Syria to Iran's nuclear program.

Since the military escalation over the weekend, Russia felt a quick economic jolt as its stock market and the currency plunged. Analysts say a full-scale economic escalation—which very few expect at this stage—would be most painful to Russia, which already experiences sluggish growth.

For the EU, the economic cost would likely also be very significant because of their deep trade ties with Russia.

"Europe would be hurt," Dutch Foreign Minister Frans Timmermans acknowledged Monday. "Those consequences will be bad for everyone, but for Russia they will be far worse than for the EU."

Environment

EPA sets cleaner fuel and car standards

WASHINGTON—Based on extensive input from the public and a broad range of stakeholders, including public health groups, auto manufacturers, refiners, and states, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Monday finalized emission standards for cars and gasoline that will significantly reduce harmful pollution and prevent thousands of premature deaths and illnesses, while also enabling efficiency improvements in the cars and trucks we drive.

These cleaner fuel and car standards are an important component of the administration's national program for clean cars and trucks, which also include historic fuel efficiency standards that are saving new vehicle owners at the gas pump. Once fully in place, the standards will help avoid up to 2,000 premature deaths per year and 50,000 cases of respiratory ailments in children.

"These standards are a win for public health, a win for our environment, and a win for our pocketbooks," said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy. "By working with the auto industry, health groups, and other stakeholders, we're continuing to build on the Obama Administration's broader clean fuels and vehicles efforts that cut carbon pollution, clean the air we breathe, and save families money at the pump."

The final standards will quickly and effectively cut harmful soot, smog, and toxic emissions from cars and trucks. This will also result in average fuel savings of more than \$8,000 by 2025 over a vehicle's lifetime. The fuel economy and greenhouse gas standards covering model year vehicles from 2012-2025 are projected to save American families more than \$1.7 trillion in fuel costs.

Following a proven approach that addresses vehicles and



Clayton Lane sits on a Toyota Prius, a hybrid-powered car, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on Monday finalized emission standards for cars and gasoline that will significantly reduce harmful pollution and prevent thousands of premature deaths and illnesses, while also enabling efficiency improvements in the cars and trucks we drive.

fuels as an integrated system, Tuesday's action will enable substantial pollution reductions at low cost. The standards slash emissions of a range of harmful pollutants that can cause premature death and respiratory illnesses, reducing standards for smog-forming volatile organic compounds and nitrogen oxides by 80 percent, establishing a 70 percent tighter particulate matter standard and virtually eliminating fuel vapor emissions. These standards will also reduce vehicle emissions of toxic air pollutants, such as benzene by up to 30 percent.

The final fuel standards will reduce gasoline sulfur levels by more than 60 percent—down from 30 to 10 parts per million (ppm) in 2017. Reducing sulfur in gasoline enables vehicle emission control technologies to perform more efficiently.

New low-sulfur gas will provide significant and immediate health benefits because every gas-powered vehicle on the road built prior to these standards will run cleaner—cutting smog-forming NOx emissions by 260,000 tons in 2018.

The Tier 3 standards cut tailpipe pollution where people live and breathe, reducing harmful emissions along the streets and roadways that run through our neighborhoods and near our children's schools.

By 2018, EPA estimates the cleaner fuels and cars program will annually prevent between 225 and 610 premature deaths, significantly reduce ambient concentrations of ozone and reduce nitrogen oxide emissions by about 260,000 tons. That is about 10 percent of emissions from on-highway vehicles, with those reductions reaching 25

percent (330,000 tons) by 2030.

By 2030, EPA estimates that up to 2,000 premature deaths, 50,000 cases of respiratory ailments in children, 2,200 hospital admissions and asthma-related emergency room visits, and 1.4 million lost school days, work days and days when activities would be restricted due to air pollution. Total health-related benefits in 2030 will be between \$6.7 and \$19 billion annually. The program will also reduce exposure to pollution near roads. More than 50 million people live, work, or go to school in close proximity to high-traffic roadways, and the average American spends more than one hour traveling along roads each day.

The final standards are expected to provide up to 13 dollars in health benefits for every dollar spent to meet the stan-

dards, more than was estimated for the proposal. The sulfur standards will cost less than a penny per gallon of gasoline on average once the standards are fully in place. The vehicle standards will have an average cost of about \$72 per vehicle in 2025. The standards support efforts by states to reduce harmful levels of smog and soot and aids their ability to attain and maintain science-based national ambient air quality standards to protect public health, while also providing flexibilities for small businesses, including hardship provisions and additional lead time for compliance.

EPA conducted extensive outreach with key stakeholders throughout the development of the rule, held two public hearings in Philadelphia and Chicago, and received more than 200,000 public comments.

The final standards are based on input from a broad range of groups, including state and local governments, auto manufacturers, emissions control suppliers, refiners, fuel distributors and others in the petroleum industry, renewable fuels providers, health and environmental organizations, consumer groups, labor groups and private citizens.

The final standards will work together with California's clean cars and fuels program to create a harmonized nationwide vehicle emissions program that enables automakers to sell the same vehicles in all 50 states. The standards are designed to be implemented over the same timeframe as the next phase of EPA's national program to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from cars and light trucks beginning in model year 2017. Together, the federal and California standards will maximize reductions in GHGs, air pollutants and air toxics from cars and light trucks while providing automakers regulatory certainty, streamlining compliance, and reducing costs to consumers.

To meet the cleaner gasoline standards necessary to reduce tailpipe emissions and protect public health, the agency has built in flexibility and adequate time for refiners to comply. For those refineries that may need it, the program would provide nearly six years to meet the standards. To provide a smooth transition for refiners to produce cleaner gasoline, the program is structured in a way that allows the industry to plan any additional investments needed. In addition, the agency is giving special considerations to small refiners, while offering provisions for compliance assistance in the case of extreme hardship or unforeseen circumstances.

More information: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/tier3.htm>. (EPA)

FIRST FRIDAY FILMS

'Buyer Be Fair' film and speaker this Friday

First Friday Films presents the new film *Buyer Be Fair* on Friday, March 7, at 6:30pm at American Memorial Park about what labels on the products we buy and sell mean and how we can use them to change the world.

Buyer Be Fair: The Promise of Product Certification takes viewer to Mexico, the Netherlands, the UK, Sweden, the USA, and Canada to explore how conscious consumers and businesses can use the market to promote social justice and environmental sustainability through product labeling, with a focus on Fair Trade coffee and Forest Stewardship Council

cil certified wood. This film is an inspirational and balanced insight into why product certifications exist and why we should pay attention to them.

Before the film, Perry Inos Jr., director of the CNMI Small Business Development Center within the CNMI Department of Commerce, will speak about his experiences with product certifications, his work promoting business development in the CNMI, and some of the ways that product certification exist on our own island. Inos is a certified business adviser, business trainer, international export adviser, America's SBDC cer-

tified counselor, as well as a business owner.

First Friday Films is a partnership between American Memorial Park, the Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality and the Humanities Council with support from other organizations and individuals. This film is sponsored by the Division of Environmental Quality. As always, our film events are free and open to the public. This event will run about 75 minutes.

For more information about First Friday Films, email fff-saipan@gmail.com or check out www.firstfridayfilms-saipan.blogspot.com. (PR)



Life & Style

A pizza delivery Edgar Martirosyan will never forget

By AMY KAUFMAN
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—When Edgar Martirosyan showed up at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday with a stack of pizza boxes in hand, he thought he was delivering a few pies to some hardworking Oscar staffers.

But Martirosyan, co-owner of Big Mama's and Papa's Pizzeria on Sunset Boulevard, soon found himself being led onto the Oscar stage by host Ellen DeGeneres. With 43 million viewers watching at home, he was instructed to hand out slices to some of Hollywood's biggest stars, including Julia Roberts and Jared Leto.

"I was shocked," Martirosyan said in a phone interview Mon-

day afternoon. "When I realized I was onstage, I didn't understand what was going on. Like, 'What am I doing here?'"

The 30-year-old's journey to Hollywood & Highland began Saturday, he said, when he received a call from an Oscar staffer asking whether he would be able to handle a delivery to the Dolby the following day. He was told he'd be getting the order after 5pm Sunday.

Oscar pizza delivery man gets \$1,000 tip

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The pizza delivery man who fed stars at the Oscars received a best tip award for a supporting player: \$1,000 in cash handed over by ceremony host Ellen DeGeneres.

That included money collected from A-list celebrities who chowed down on the pies during the ceremony Sunday and from DeGeneres herself.

Edgar Martirosyan received the tip during a visit Monday to "The Ellen DeGeneres Show."

DeGeneres said she passed

Pharrell Williams' oversized hat at the Oscars and collected about \$600, then contributed more.

The Big Mama's & Papa's delivery guy said he had already gotten a reward: serving Julia Roberts, whom he called the woman of his dreams.

DeGeneres received her own Oscars spiff. Her talk show's producer, Telepictures Productions, says Monday's episode was the highest-rated in the series' 11-year history.



Brad Pitt, left, and Ellen DeGeneres, right, pass out pizza in the audience during the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Los Angeles. AP

When Sunday evening rolled around, Martirosyan was slammed. He doesn't usually deliver pizzas himself—that stopped five years ago, when he went from an employee to co-owner of the Hollywood outpost of the pizzeria. But because of how busy it was, he decided to help out and drive over to the Dolby himself.

Even though he had to pass

through a number of security barriers, he never imagined that he would end up as part of the telecast.

"They told me it was going to be for the writers," he said.

When he finally got backstage, he was told to wait, and suddenly DeGeneres appeared. She introduced herself to him, and then the host told Martirosyan to follow her, without saying where they were going. She

didn't give him any instructions on how to behave or what to say, and before he knew it he was in front of the Hollywood elite.

Born in Armenia, Martirosyan moved to Moscow at age 10; there, he grew up watching some Hollywood films, including Roberts' "Pretty Woman." Needless to say, he was star struck when he found himself handing her a slice of cheese pizza. "She was actually more beautiful in person," he said with a laugh.

And then, just as quickly

as he'd found himself in the spotlight, he was back at work. When he walked into the pizza shop, his employees greeted him with screams. Reporters from local news outlets and paparazzi had also gathered outside the restaurant.

On Monday morning, Martirosyan filmed an interview with DeGeneres for her talk show in Burbank, while his Facebook page was covered with comments from friends congratulating him on the Oscars appearance.

Cuaron's long, transforming trip to stage

By GREG BRAXTON
LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—Alfonso Cuaron, who labored for four years in creating "Gravity," won the Oscar on Sunday for best director at the 86th Academy Awards.

The native Mexican filmmaker, who had already won the Golden Globe, the BAFTA and the Directors Guild Award, became the first Latin American to win the Academy Award in the category.

The director received a rousing reception when his name was announced. When he finally reached the stage after hugging and kissing several well-wishers, Cuaron shared a soulful handshake with presenter and Oscar winner Sidney Poitier.

"I want to thank 'Gravity' because for many of us involved in this film, it was definitely a transformative experience," Cuaron said during his acceptance speech. He then quipped, "It's good, because it took so long that if it was not, it would have been a waste of time."

He made another joke in thanking Warner Bros., the studio behind the film. At first, he referred to them as "the wise guys of Warner Bros." before correcting himself, saying "the wise people of Warner Bros."

The directing award was the second Oscar of the night for Cuaron, who shared the editing award with Mark Sanger.

The suspenseful story starring Sandra



Alfonso Cuaron poses in the press room with the award for best film editing for "Gravity" during the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Los Angeles. AP

Bullock as a desperate astronaut stranded in space dominated the technical categories, winning five other Oscars, including visual effects and cinematography.

Cuaron praised his son Jonas, who co-wrote the film, and paid special tribute to Bullock.

"Sandy, you are 'Gravity,'" he said to

the actress, whose portrayal won her a lead actress nomination. "You are the soul and heart of the film. You are the most amazing collaborator and one of the greatest people I have ever met."

In the last several weeks, the director race had been one of the more competitive and closely watched of the awards season.

Cuaron was considered a front-runner for the Oscar along with "12 Years a Slave" director Steve McQueen.

The filmmaker had spent four years working on "Gravity," which presented numerous technical obstacles.

To create the illusion of Bullock and co-star George Clooney floating through space, Cuaron and his team strapped them into mechanized rigs designed to spin them around on command, while a camera was similarly mounted on a giant robotic arm.

But Cuaron has repeatedly said the technology was secondary to his goal of depicting a heartwrenching journey for Bullock's character.

"I never thought about making a groundbreaking film," Cuaron said last September at the Telluride Film Festival.

"It was just the only way to make this story about a woman overcoming adversity."

"Gravity" is the latest in Cuaron's impressive gallery of prestige films that include "Children of Men," "Y Tu Mama Tambien" and "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban."

In Celebration of His New Life

Elgia Uriah Petty
Better known as Sam
DOB: September 16, 1939
DOD: March 1, 2014

On Friday, March 7, 2014, there will be a celebration of life gathering at VFW from 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm.

Sea burial will be held on March 8, 2014 at Pacific Marine I, Seaplane Ramp.

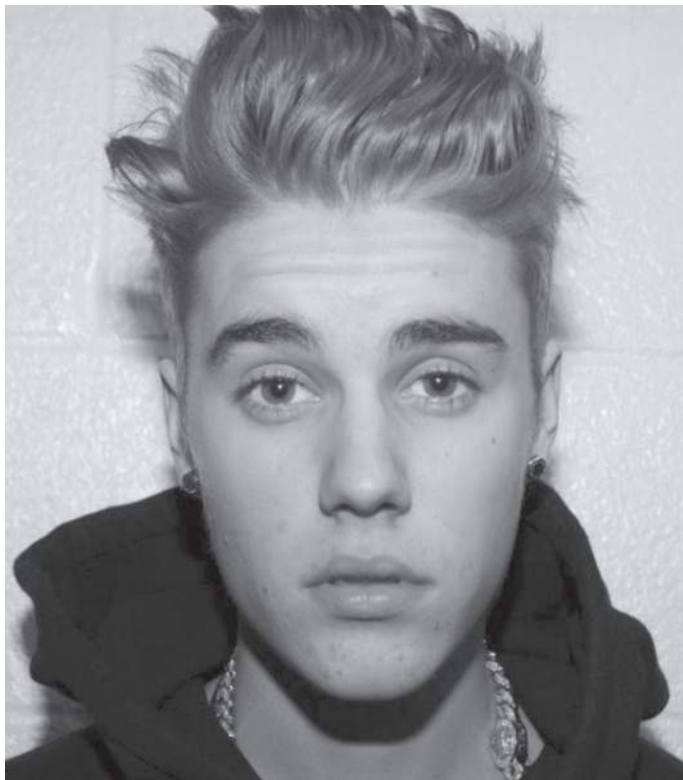
Judge orders Bieber video released with blackouts

MIAMI (AP)—Remaining police video clips of Justin Bieber after his January arrest will be made public with sensitive portions blacked out to protect the singer's privacy, a judge ruled Tuesday.

Miami-Dade County Judge William Altfield said two of the five unreleased video clips depict the singer's genitalia during a urine test for drugs at the Miami Beach Police Department. Altfield agreed with lawyers for Bieber, who turned 20 on Saturday, that the video's airing would be an invasion of privacy that outweighed the public's right to know.

"Mr. Bieber's right to privacy is paramount," the judge said. "He has not lost his right to privacy, and that is what is important here."

Separately, the Miami Beach Police Department made public a new set of 18 photos taken shortly after Bieber's arrest, mainly close-ups of his many tattoos—a praying Jesus, a grin-



In this Jan. 23, 2014 photo made available by the Miami Beach Police Dept. on Tuesday, March 4, 2014, shows Justin Bieber at the police station in Miami Beach, Fla. AP

ning joker's face accompanied by the word "love," a Psalms quotation, and more—and one full-length picture of the singer.

Attorneys for The Associated Press and other news outlets had previously suggested any sensitive portions be blacked out and the rest released under Florida's liberal open records laws. Much of the footage was released last week, some of it showing Bieber walking unsteadily during a sobriety test.

Bieber has pleaded not guilty to charges of driving under the influence, resisting arrest and driving with an expired license. He and R&B singer Khalil Amir Sharieff were arrested early on Jan. 23 during what police called an illegal street drag race between a Lamborghini and a Ferrari. Neither has been charged with drag racing.

Bieber attorney Roy Black said he was satisfied with the ruling, as did media attorneys. AP attorney Deanna Shull-

man said the news organization would never show Bieber's private parts, and Scott Ponce, representing The Miami Herald and CBS television stations, said the ruling was more about protecting the singer from random releases on the Internet.

Black said the three clips to be released without redaction are shot from an angle that is too far away to discern what is going on.

Prosecutors said they will release all five remaining clips in a few days, after the court-ordered redactions are completed.

Evidence released previously showed that a breath test found Bieber's blood-alcohol level below the .02 threshold considered intoxicated for underage drivers. The urine test found the presence of the active ingredient in marijuana and the antianxiety drug Xanax. Bieber told officers he had been smoking marijuana before his arrest, according to police reports.

A trial date has not been set.

Piers Morgan emailed support to Brooks on hacking

LONDON (AP)—Former News of the World editor Rebekah Brooks said Tuesday that she received abuse and death threats after it was revealed the newspaper had hacked the voicemails of a murdered 13-year-old girl. But she also got messages of support from high-profile figures including CNN talk-show host Piers Morgan and former Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Brooks was testifying for an eighth day at her trial on phone hacking-related charges. She denies guilt.

Brooks headed Rupert Murdoch's British newspapers when the scandal erupted in July 2011, and said she soon became the focus of the "horrific" story.

The court was read an email from Morgan, a former tabloid editor, telling Brooks to "grit your teeth and stay strong."

Brooks replied: "Can't believe any reporter would do that"—referring to phone hacking. "Must have been Mulcaire."

Private investigator Glenn Mulcaire has pleaded guilty to hacking voicemails on behalf of the News of the World.

Blair wrote: "Let me know if there's anything I can help you with. Thinking of you. I've been through things like this."

Brooks replied that "hopefully even in this climate the truth will out."

The jury heard earlier that Blair had offered to work as an unofficial adviser to Brooks and Murdoch over the scandal.

Murdoch shut the News of the World after news broke that its employees had eavesdropped on the voicemails of Milly Dowler, who was kidnapped and murdered in 2002.

Brooks resigned on July 15 and was arrested two days later.

She and six others are accused of wrongdoing, including phone hacking, bribing officials and obstructing a police investigation. All have pleaded not guilty.

Brooks' lawyer, Jonathan Laidlaw, asked Thursday whether she had asked her personal assistant and co-accused Cheryl Carter to hide evidence by removing boxes from the archives of Murdoch's News International. Brooks replied: "Absolutely not."

'Dancing With the Stars' new cast revealed

By YVONNE VILLARREAL
LOS ANGELES TIMES

LOS ANGELES—The new crop of celebrity hoofers competing in Season 18 of "Dancing With the Stars" has been revealed.

As has become tradition, the unveiling occurred Tuesday morning during "Good Morning America," with the celebrity cast on hand live.

There are TV stars of yesteryear, including "The Wonder Years'" Danica McKellar (aka Winnie Cooper), and "Full House" big sis Candace Cameron Bure (DJ Tanner).

Some sports stars: recent gold medal winners from the Sochi Olympics, ice skating duo Meryl Davis and Charlie White; and swimming legend Diana Nyad. And some firsts: snowboarding champ Amy Purdy, who lost her legs as a teenager, will be the first Paralympian to compete; and Sean Avery will be the first former hockey player to hit the shiny

wood floors.

Also getting in the dancing fun are comedian-turned-game show host Drew Carey, "Real Housewives" personality NeNe Leakes, and acting veteran Billy Dee Williams.

Sure to bring in some young viewers are Australian pop singer Cody Simpson and "Big Time Rush" actor-singer James Maslow.

The long-running ABC show, whose ratings have been slipping in recent seasons, comes into its 18th season with more than a fresh crop of celebrity contestants. The show recently axed co-host Brooke Burke-Charvet and replaced her with former contestant / sports host Erin Andrews. The show is also experimenting with a new format that allows viewers to switch celebrities and their pro-partners mid-season.

Of course, the professional dancers have earned their own fan base. So here's the rundown of who the celebrities will be paired up with.

- Pro dancing bad boy Maksim Chmerkovskiy will return after sitting out last season, paired with Davis.
- Karina Smirnoff partners with Avery.
- Mark Ballas partners with Bure.
- Cheryl Burke partners with Carey.
- Derek Hough partners with Purdy.
- Witney Carson partners with Simpson.
- Sharna Burgess partners with White.
- Emma Slater partners with Williams.
- Valentin Chmerkovskiy partners with McKellar.
- Peta Murgatroyd partners with Maslow.
- Tony Dovolani partners with Leakes.
- First timer Henry Byalikov partners with Nyad.

The new season of "Dancing with the Stars" begins March 17.



This Feb. 27, 2014 file photo shows Olympic gold medalist ice skaters Meryl Davis and Charlie White, left, at the Empire State Building in New York. AP

POP CULTURE Q&A

What happened to 'Good Morning America' weatherman?

By RICH HELDENFELS
AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

Q: What has happened to Sam, the weather guy on "Good Morning America"? He just disappeared.

A: Actually, Sam Champion moved on to another network. He has joined the Weather Channel, where he will host a morning show beginning March 17.

The show will be called "AMHQ With Sam Champion," the letters standing for America's Morning Headquarters. It will air from 7 to 10 a.m. Eastern time weekdays, live from the Weather Channel operations in Atlanta. Co-hosts will include Maria LaRosa and Mike Bettes.

Q: We loved the show "Unforgettable," about the female detective with the amazing memory. Is it coming back?

A: Look for the drama to begin a third run on

CBS beginning April 4. It remains a surprising success, canceled after its first season, then brought back from the dead with a casting and story overhaul for a second season, then picked up for another go-round. Poppy Montgomery stars.

Q: Do you have any information on the change in cast for the current "The Borgias" on Showtime vs. the original cast in "Borgia" also on Showtime? Looks like Seasons 1 and 2 were remade as we saw them on the original series and see some changes in the current series.

A: Instead of being a recasting of a single series, "The Borgias" and "Borgia" were two different series covering some of the same historical ground and airing around the same time, albeit in different venues. "The Borgias," which aired on Showtime, ran for three seasons beginning in 2011. It starred Jeremy Irons as Rodrigo Borgia, who became Pope Alexander VI, and was created

by Neil Jordan. "Borgia," also known as "Borgia: Faith and Fear," was created by Tom Fontana and stars John Doman as Rodrigo / Alexander VI. It has aired for two seasons on Netflix; a third and final season has been shot for eventual telecast.

Since the two series were commissioned at about the same time, there was an attempt to get Fontana and Jordan to join forces. But, Fontana told me once, "We realized ... that we wanted to make two completely different versions of this story. From that point on, I just decided to pretend that the other one doesn't exist." "The Borgias" is now on Netflix, DVD and Blu-ray, and is a digital download on Amazon.com and iTunes. The first season of "Borgia" is on DVD and is a digital download on iTunes and Amazon.com.

Q: I sometimes enjoy watching the Marx Brothers. In all of their films, and on sitcoms that Harpo appears, Harpo never talks. Was Harpo just act-

ing, or he really couldn't talk for real?

A: Harpo Marx was famous for his pantomime skills, accented by his not speaking. Besides the movies, his "mirror" act with Lucille Ball made one of the great "I Love Lucy" episodes. But that was the act: he could speak perfectly well, although he seldom did in public in order to preserve the magic of his character.

Harpo, by the way, was born Adolph Marx, also known as Arthur. He was the second oldest of five performing brothers; the others, from oldest to youngest, were Chico (born Leonard), Groucho (Julius), Gummo (Milton) and Zeppo (Herbert). Gummo was in the vaudeville act but left before the brothers made their mark in movies; Zeppo appeared in five movies with Groucho, Harpo and Chico, but then left the team. All have passed away.

Rich Heldenfels writes about popular culture for the Beacon Journal and Ohio.com, including the HeldenFiles Online, www.ohio.com/blogs/heldenfiles. He is also on Facebook and Twitter.

Travolta apologizes to Menzel for flub

NEW YORK (AP)—John Travolta is apologizing to Tony Award winner Idina Menzel for mangling the pronunciation of her name on the Oscars telecast.

Travolta says in a statement released Tuesday he's been beating himself up all day and came to the conclusion Menzel would counsel: Let it go.

On Sunday night's Academy Awards, Travolta took the stage and introduced Men-

zel but seemed to say "Adele Dazeem" instead. An estimated 43 million people were watching, and social media has been mocking him relentlessly since then.

Menzel played Maureen Johnson in "Rent" onstage and on screen and Elphaba in "Wicked." She seemed unperturbed by the flub as she sang out "Let It Go," from the animated film "Frozen."

NY Times prints Northup correction 161 years later

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Times has printed a correction for misspelling 161 years ago the name of a black man who was sold into slavery and whose memoirs were turned into the Oscar-winning movie "12 Years a Slave."

In a Jan. 20, 1853, article, the Times misspelled Solomon Northup's surname as Northrop and as Northrup.

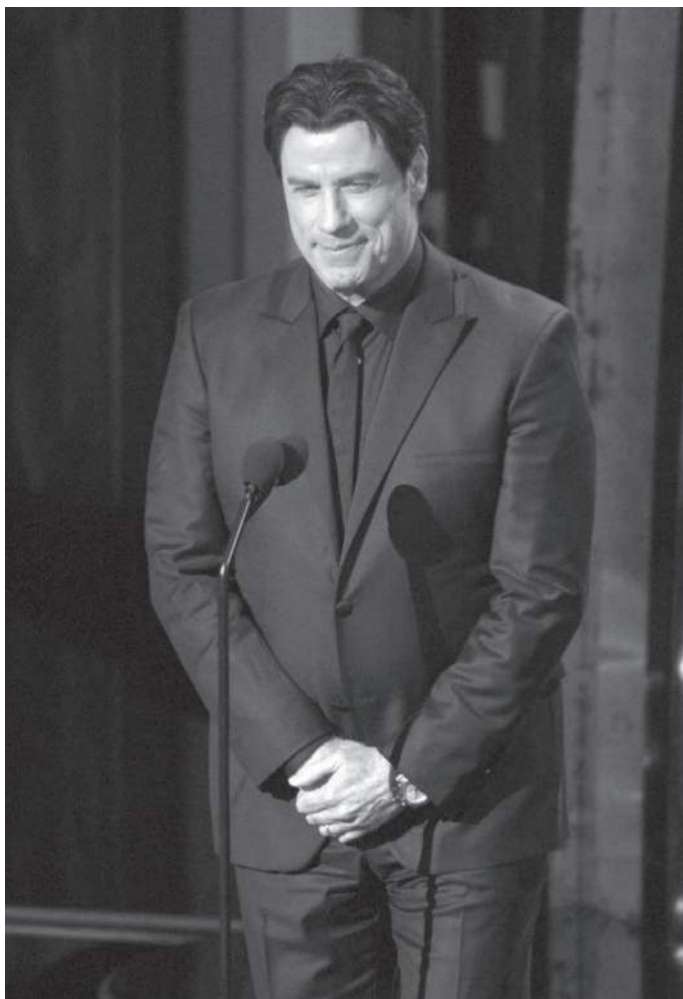
The Times corrected Northup's name on Tuesday, after the errors were pointed out by someone looking at its archives.

The correction said the article

about Northup had "misspelled his surname as Northrop. And the headline misspelled it as Northrup."

Northup was born in New York and was kidnapped and sold as a slave in 1841. He spent the next dozen years in Louisiana before regaining his freedom.

"12 Years a Slave" won the Oscar for best picture at the Academy Awards on Sunday. It starred Chiwetel Ejiofor as Northup and Lupita Nyong'o as Patsey, another slave. Nyong'o won the Oscar for best actress in a supporting role.



Presenter John Travolta speaks during the Oscars at the Dolby Theatre on Sunday, March 2, 2014, in Los Angeles. AP

Conan O'Brien to host MTV Movie Awards

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Conan O'Brien will be serving up buckets of golden popcorn.

O'Brien announced Tuesday on his TBS talk show "Conan" that he's hosting this year's MTV Movie Awards. The annual movie celebration that honors winners with golden popcorn trophies is scheduled for April 13 at the Nokia The-



AP
In this Dec. 12, 2013, file photo, talk show host Conan O'Brien arrives for the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences awards in Moffett Field, Calif.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

First lady bringing soul singers to White House

WASHINGTON (AP)—First lady Michelle Obama is bringing together an impressive group of female artists for a White House concert celebrating women of soul. The lineup for Thursday's concert includes Aretha Franklin, Patti LaBelle, Melissa Etheridge and Janelle Monae. Also performing will be Tessanne Chin, Ariana Grande and Jill Scott. The show will be streamed live Thursday night on the White House web site. It is designed to celebrate what the White House describes as great "foremothers" of American music, with songs exploring the struggles and achievements of women. In connection with the concert, the White House will hold a workshop for students to learn about the history of women in soul.

Paul Simon, Sting rock Madison Square Garden

NEW YORK (AP)—From the time the two musical icons stepped on the Madison Square Garden stage, it was clear from their very first glance that Paul Simon and Sting shared mutual affection for each other. After opening with Sting's "Brand New Day" Tuesday night,

followed by Simon's "The Boy in the Bubble," the two performers rotated on and off stage for the next two-and-a-half hours. By the end of the night, the two legendary performers had covered a poignant mix of their hits and obscurities and brought life to each other's music. The show's final songs were duets of "Bridge Over Troubled Water," "Every Breath You Take," and "Late in the Evening."

Signature voice Carl Kasell retiring from NPR

WASHINGTON (AP)—Carl Kasell, a signature voice of NPR News for decades, is stepping down from the comedy news quiz show "Wait, Wait ... Don't Tell Me!" and retiring from the network this spring. Kasell has been a recognizable voice on NPR for decades. He was a newscaster for 30 years on "Morning Edition" until 2009. His radio career spans half a century, starting as a morning deejay and newscaster at WGBR-AM in Goldsboro, N.C. NPR announced Kasell's retirement Tuesday. After three decades as a newscaster, Kasell became the official judge and scorekeeper of the Chicago-based show "Wait, Wait ... Don't Tell Me!" Kasell says his time on "Wait, Wait" has been his favorite years at NPR because he could meet and talk to the audiences he felt he knew.

atre in downtown Los Angeles.

"After eight years of intense negotiations, I am honored to announce I am hosting MTV's second most prestigious awards show," the comedian joked in a statement.

It marks the first time O'Brien has hosted the MTV Movie Awards. He previously hosted the Primetime Emmy Awards in 2002 and 2006.

Past hosts of the MTV Movie Awards have included Jimmy Fallon, Aziz Ansari, Russell Brand, Rebel Wilson and Sarah Silverman.

'Housewives' couple plead guilty to fraud in NJ

NEWARK, New Jersey (AP)—Husband-and-wife members of the "Real Housewives of New Jersey" cast have pleaded guilty to fraud.

Teresa and Giuseppe "Joe" Giudice both pleaded guilty to several counts including bankruptcy fraud, conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud. He also pleaded guilty to failing to pay taxes.

Under federal guidelines, Joe Giudice faces a potential sentence of 37 to 46 months and Teresa Giudice could get 21 to 27 months.

In a statement read by her lawyer, Teresa Giudice said she is taking responsibility for her mistakes and is "heartbroken" over the effect it has had on her four young daughters.

The couple was accused last year of exaggerating income while applying for loans before the show debuted in 2009, then hiding their fortunes in a bankruptcy filing after their first season aired.

Reading obituaries may comfort a lonely heart

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: "Still Alive in San Diego" (Nov. 22) said she reads the obituaries every day and feels somehow disappointed when she doesn't see a name she recognizes. She asked if it was "weird" and you told her yes, that it seemed like a lack of empathy.

I don't agree. What's happening is this woman is lonely and the activity has become the hub of her day. It gives her something—sadly—to look forward to and a sense of closeness to her acquaintances when she recognizes their names.

My advice to her would be to find another way to fill the void and not obsess about the obits. Joining a club or taking up a physical activity would allow her to meet people. I'm betting she will feel less of a need to connect to the obituaries if she expands her social circle to include the living.

BEEN THERE, TOO, IN RHODE ISLAND

DEAR BEEN THERE, TOO: Your point is well-stated, and it was echoed by other readers who, like you, read between the lines of "Still Alive's" short letter. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: If the letter-writer is ill, disabled, elderly or has outlived most of her companions, it might explain her "letdown" when no one she knows appears in the obituaries. Seeing a familiar name may bring back memories of better times and make her feel more connected to the outside world.

JULIE IN WISCONSIN

DEAR ABBY: An obituary is more than a death announcement. It tells a story. It's often the last memory loved ones have of someone cherished, and it's the deceased's introduction to a sea of strangers.

Obituaries are scrapbooked and prized, and researched for generations by genealogists, historians and relatives looking to complete their family tree. A well-done obituary is the final word on how a person is remembered.

SANDY IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR ABBY: Some people, whether or not they live and associate with friends and family, feel a certain emptiness in their lives and look for different ways to feel SOMETHING emotionally. Finding the name of someone they know, especially in an obituary, where some of the person's biography is included, provides the opportunity to feel compassion toward that individual or even feel grateful to still be alive. Not finding a familiar name can seem like a missed opportunity to experience that.

LOYAL READER, ARLINGTON, VA.

DEAR ABBY: Please tell "Still Alive" she isn't alone. I have often wondered why I look through the obituaries half-hoping to see someone I know. I suspect it may be similar to how people slow down to view a car wreck. I'm a sympathetic, caring person; I don't consider myself weird or cold-blooded.

EMPATHIZING IN HONOLULU

DEAR ABBY: I, too, am a daily obit reader. I have lived in this town for more than 50 years, and I know a lot of people here. When I see a name I know, or the name of a family member of a friend, I take the opportunity to send a card to express my condolences.

And, by the way, your column appears on the same page as the obituaries in my local newspaper, and I'd never want to miss a day of Dear Abby!

BIG FAN IN TUCSON

DEAR BIG FAN: Bless you!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

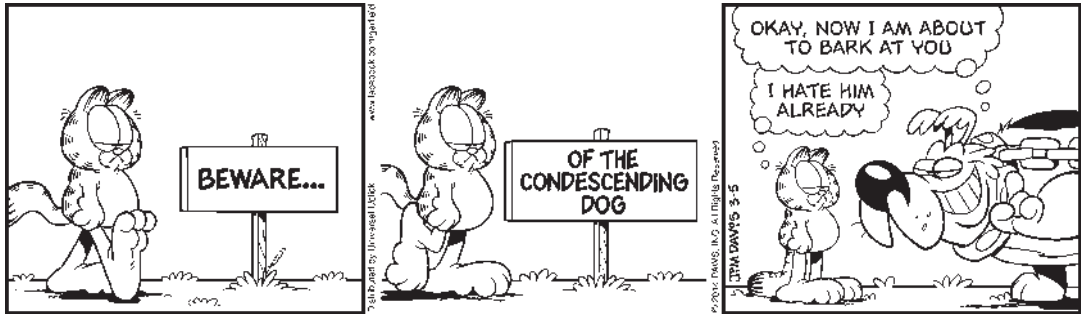
Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

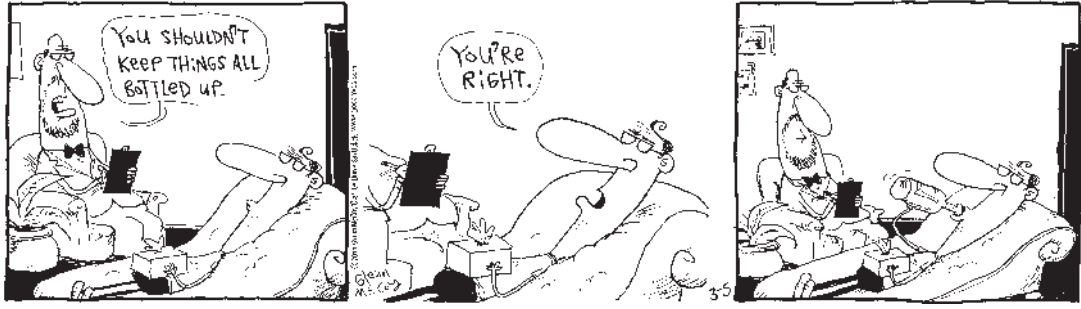
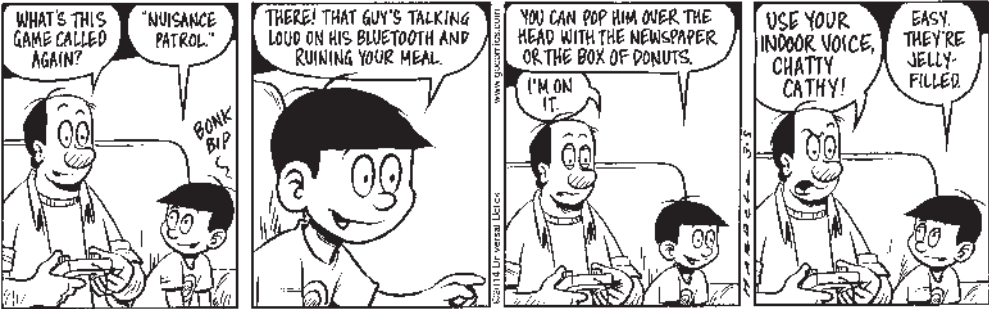


Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Bear hair

4 Ashy

7 July 4, 1776, e.g.

8 Impel

10 Put in a carton

11 Tortoni ingredient

13 "Old Folks at Home" penner

16 DOE

17 Rags-to-riches writer

18 — Tin

19 Edges

20 Second letter

21 Fairy tale family

23 Des-chanel of "New Girl"

25 Chester — Arthur

26 Clinton Cabinet member

27 Decay

28 Michel-angelo master-piece

30 Donkey

33 Guardi-ans of a sort

36 "Castle" concern

37 One type of key-board ...

38 ... and another

39 Easter emblem

40 Flamenco cheer

41 CSA VIP

2 Miners' sch.

3 Lucille Ball trade-mark

4 "The Bonfire of the Vanities" writer

5 Knight-clothes?

6 Sgt. and Cpl.

7 Be too fond

8 Vam-pire's features

9 Main course

10 Merit badge org.

12 God

14 Shade providers

15 Genetic matter

19 Skedad-dled

20 Greet the villain

21 Actor Orlando

22 Really, really likes

23 Catherine —

24 Continu-ally winning

25 "Bow-wow"

26 Copy, for short

28 Go by bike

29 "Good-night" girl

30 View-point

31 Remain

32 IRS ID

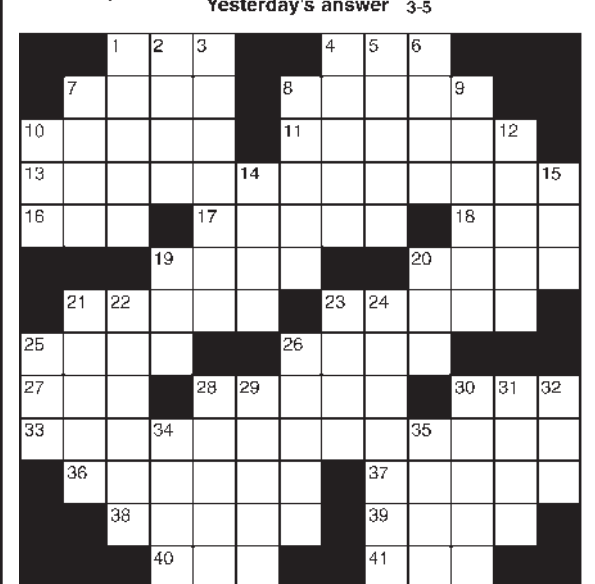
34 21-

35 Across, e.g.

Great Lake

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterdays answer 3-5



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Kevin Connolly, 40; Matt Lucas, 40; Eva Mendes, 40; Dean Stockwell, 78.

Happy Birthday: Take a bold approach, and you will make a difference this year to your own life, as well as to those you deal with regularly. Diversity will enable you to meet any demands you face. Show your intent, tolerance and ability to adapt to the changing world around you. Doors will open as you go, leading to unexpected gains. Your numbers are 3, 14, 22, 25, 31, 46.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Implement a couple of changes to your appearance or mannerisms to stay comfortably within the boundaries set by those you must deal with regularly. The effort you make will show your interest in being a team player. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Take pride in what you do and continue to make plans for the future. Refrain from discussing your ideas openly and don't feel the need to make alterations based on what others do. Stick to your strategy and keep moving forward. ***

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't share too much information with those looking for help or a handout. You are best to wait and watch to see what's really needed and what isn't. Make sure that motives are in the right place before you make a commitment. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Take the road less traveled. You'll attract attention if you take a unique approach to whatever you do. Use your imagination and you'll come

up with something innovative that will help others. Respect must be gained, not bought. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You are overdue for a change. A chance to re-evaluate and make personal moves will help you stabilize your current situation. Don't allow an emotional incident to affect your professional choices or productivity. Be reserved in your dealings with others. **

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Look for things to do that inspire you mentally, physically and emotionally. Getting together with friends, focusing on family or even taking care of personal needs will give you the boost you need to broaden your perspective and expand your pursuits. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can spread yourself a little thin and get things accomplished that will make onlookers jealous of your success. Romance is in the stars and will make your personal life that much more fulfilling and exciting. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't let emotional conversations stifle what you can do. Your focus should be on creativity and making your home a place of comfort and entertainment. Use your imagination and expand in areas that interest you. Explore new possibilities. ***

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't be fooled by what others say or do. Look at what you can do to improve your personal life and your surroundings. Protect your physical and emotional wellness by taking

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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precautions not to make the same mistakes you have in the past. ***

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Put your ideas to the test. Flush out any problems and follow through until you reach the desired results before you present what you have to offer to others. Put time aside for love and romance. ****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Plunge into what you want to accomplish. Don't waste time explaining what you are doing. Someone is likely to try to lead you astray or use your hard work to get ahead. Do things for yourself, not for others. **

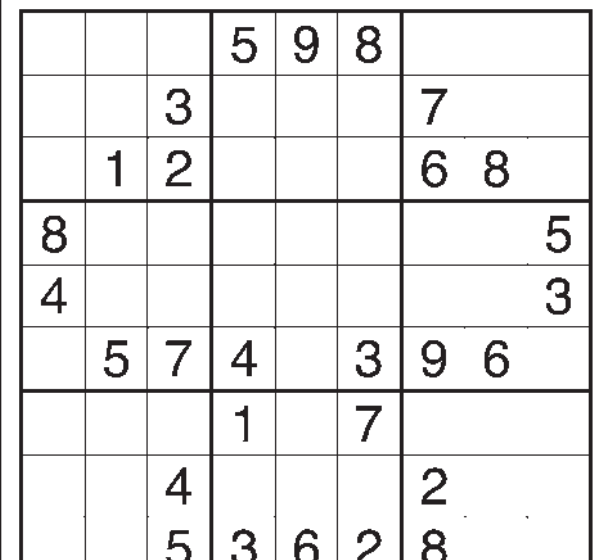
PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You can make a difference and a good impression if you help others. The rewards will be greater than anticipated. Getting together with someone from your past will spark an idea you'll want to pursue. Love is on the rise. ****

Birthday Baby: You are a proactive, outgoing dreamer with a plan to succeed.

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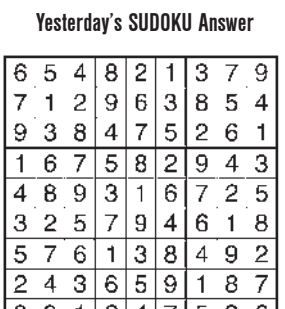
Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★ 3/05

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.



WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE Solution: 10 letters

C A R G O C C A B O T R M M N
S M O K Y C A R I P A E O A O
W L S L I O P S E E R C V Y R
D S P I H S T D P C R Y I N T
D E L S T O R S H A S N E A H
O S U I O A I A C A T O S R C
O U N B W L N O I I R T A D A
W F D D V T K L M E R E I N R
S L E E P E O I B R E L L E O
T E R O T R D B E N G E I G L
O E R A S A O D E E N K N E I
P T R U T R A B D N A S G L N
S I G E A E D B E A R D I O A
P A E E L O N G N J A O C O C
R S S H I P W R E C K M Y T H

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Beard, Boots, Cargo, Cocoa, Eden, Edward, Fleet, Fuses, Gold, Intimidate, Jane, Leader, Legend, Long, Loot, Maynard, Merchant, Movies, Myth, Navy Sailors, North Carolina, Ocracoke, Piracy, Pirate, Plunder, Ports, Ranger, Sailing, Sandbar, Sea Robber, Ships, Shipwreck, Silver, Skeleton, Smoky, Spear, Spoils, Spotswood, Sugar, Tobacco

Yesterday's Answer: Website

Treasury 12, 13, 14 or 15 can be purchased online at wonderword.universalclicke.com. (Contain 130 puzzles.)

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Warriors hand Pacers rare home loss, 98-96



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Klay Thompson seized the moment twice Tuesday night.

With a victory seemingly slipping away late in the third quarter, his quick scoring flurry helped Golden State regain control early in the fourth. Then, when it seemed the Warriors wouldn't be able to hold off Indiana's late charge, he knocked down a 12-foot turnaround jumper with 0.6 seconds to go, giving the Warriors a rare 98-96 victory in Indianapolis.

"We'll take any win we can get in this building," Thompson said. "This team is real good here. They're the best in the NBA (at home). To come here and get a win, it's huge, especially on this road trip."

Thompson was terrific in his dramatic closing act. He started the quarter by making his first three shots and finished with 16 of his 25 points over the final 12 minutes—none bigger than the baseline fadeaway he hit over George Hill.

For the Warriors (37-24), it was a monumental victory.

They have won five of six and are 6-2 since the All-Star break. They have matched last season's road victory total (19), the first time they've achieved the feat in back-to-back seasons since 1970-71 and 1971-72, and they snapped a six-game losing streak in Indy that dated to Feb. 5, 2007.

The victory also gives Golden State the distinction of being the only team in the league this season with wins at Miami, the two-time defending league champion, and at Indiana, which owns the league's best record and best home record (29-4).

The Warriors can thank Thompson for bailing them out after blowing a 13-point lead with less than 6 1/2 minutes to go.

"He was great," Golden State coach Mark Jackson said. "He's durable and you take him for granted. He's a guy who's never missed a game. He was big-time."

It was a stinging loss for the Pacers (46-14), who had won five straight and could have clinched a playoff spot in front of a sellout crowd.

Paul George had 12 points and eight rebounds in the first quarter. He finished with 26 points and 12 rebounds, missing a potential go-ahead 3-pointer with 23.9 seconds left and the 29-foot buzzer beater that would have won it as he fell into the scorer's table. David West had 27 points and seven rebounds.

Yet the league's top-ranked defense allowed Golden State to shoot 44 percent from the field and make 10 of 20 3s—the latest uncharacteristic showing against the NBA's third-best team in defending the arc.

The only good thing was that the Pacers didn't lose any ground

in the chase for the top seed in the East. They're still two games ahead of Miami after the Heat lost at Houston.

But West knows the Pacers can't continue to rely on beating up bad teams and cranking up the intensity when necessary.

"Mentally, we've got to be way tougher than we are because it's time, you know, it's just time," West said. "It's just not something that you can just say a week before the playoffs, say, 'OK.' You've got to work your way into it. But as a group, it's time. We've got a tough three-game trip coming up and it's just time."

The Warriors sure made things tough on the Pacers.

They took a 10-8 first-quarter lead and didn't give it up until Lance Stephenson scored on a layup that made it 56-54 with 7:29 left in the third. Golden State started pulling away again with an 8-0 run late in the third, then fended off another Indiana spurt that got the Pacers to 73-70 after three.

That's when Thompson got involved.

After making two free throws, he hit an 18-footer, a 3 and a 16-footer to give Golden State an 84-74 lead. When he hit his third 3 with 6:23 to go, the lead was 92-79 and the Pacers appeared to be doomed.

"They caused us to protect the basket, which was a chain reaction to kick the ball out and shoot open 3s," George said.

Indiana came right back. West, George and Roy Hibbert accounted for all the points in a 12-0 run that suddenly tied the score at 94 with 2:13 to go.

But the Warriors regained the lead on David Lee's layup and, after George tied it at 96 with 1:06 left, he missed an open 3.

Thompson then hit the go-ahead basket and the Warriors celebrated as George's potential winner was short.

"It felt great. To hit that shot,



Golden State Warriors' Klay Thompson (11) puts up the game winning shot against Indiana Pacers' George Hill (3) during the second half of an NBA basketball game Tuesday, March 4, 2014, in Indianapolis. AP

I'm not going to lie, it felt great," Thompson said. "I proved to people I can make that shot and I wanted that shot."

Rockets 106, Heat 103

In Houston, Dwight Howard had 22 points and 16 rebounds, James Harden added 21 points and the Houston Rockets held LeBron James in a win over the Miami Heat.

James had 22 points, one night after setting a club record with a career-best 61 against Charlotte. He acknowledged before the game that he was "extremely tired" and that he spent most of the day sleeping.

He had 19 points by halftime,

but appeared to drag at times in the second half and spent the first half of the fourth quarter on the bench.

Still, the Heat cut their deficit to three when Michael Beasley hit a 3-pointer with 21.2 seconds left. Harden threw the ball away after that, and Howard accidentally hit James in the face when they both went up to try to grab a long pass.

James lay on the court holding his broken nose for a few seconds before getting up and slowly walking to the bench. He remained in the game after a timeout, but missed a desperation 3-point attempt at the buzzer that would have tied it.

The four-time MVP has been wearing a protective mask to protect his broken nose.

Dwyane Wade had 24 points for the Heat after sitting out Monday night. Beasley also scored 24.

Thunder 125, 76ers 92

In Oklahoma City, Russell Westbrook had a triple-double in 21 minutes and Kevin Durant scored 42 points to help Oklahoma City defeat woeful Philadelphia for its third straight win.

Westbrook wrapped up his eighth career triple-double on a rebound with 4:55 left in the third quarter. He left the game moments later and did not return. He finished with 13 points, 10 rebounds and 14 assists.

Serge Ibaka and Reggie Jackson each scored 14 points and Perry Jones added 12 for the Thunder, who shot 57 percent from the field in their most lopsided victory of the season.

James Anderson scored 20 for the 76ers, who lost their 15th in a row, their longest slide since a 15-game skid in 1994. Philadelphia shot just 34 percent.

Durant, who made 14 of 20 shots from the floor, did not play in the fourth quarter.

Spurs 122, Cavaliers 101

In Cleveland, Danny Green scored 24 points and San Antonio turned to its 3-point shooting to shake off a sluggish start in a victory over Cleveland.

Kawhi Leonard added 18 points, and Patty Mills and Boris Diaw had 16 apiece as the Spurs won their fourth straight. They did it with stars Tim Duncan and Tony Parker combining for just 14 points.

San Antonio, chasing Oklahoma City for the best record in the Western Conference, made 14 of 33 3-pointers. The Spurs trailed by 12 early in the second before making six straight 3s.

Kyrie Irving and Dion Waiters scored 24 each for the Cavs,

who have lost nine straight to the Spurs. Spencer Hawes added 20 points and 13 rebounds for Cleveland.

Clippers 104, Suns 96

In Phoenix, Matt Barnes scored 18 of his season-high 28 points in the third quarter and Los Angeles beat Phoenix for its fifth victory in a row.

Barnes made 12 of his first 13 shots, scoring 16 points in the first 5:09 of the third quarter. Blake Griffin added 22 points and Darren Collison had 18 for Los Angeles.

DeAndre Jordan had 10 points and 17 rebounds and blocked Goran Dragic's layup try with the Suns still in it with 41 seconds to go.

P.J. Tucker scored 18 and Gerald Green 17 on 6-of-19 shooting for the Suns, who played without center Miles Plumlee (right knee sprain). They also lost guard Leandro Barbosa to a broken left hand in the first half.

Pelicans 132, Lakers 125

In Los Angeles, Anthony Davis had 28 points and 15 rebounds, Eric Gordon also scored 28 and New Orleans beat Los Angeles to snap an eight-game losing streak.

Brian Roberts scored 10 of his 19 points for New Orleans during a 1½-minute span in the fourth quarter. Tyreke Evans had 24 points and 11 assists, helping the Pelicans salvage the finale of a five-game road trip.

The win ended a string of nine straight road losses to the Lakers and was only the third for New Orleans in the last 18 meetings overall.

Pau Gasol had 29 points and 12 rebounds for the Lakers, who were attempting to match their longest winning streak of the season at three. The loss was their 27th in 35 games and dropped them back into sole possession of last place in the Western Conference.

Mavs need to beat best of West in playoff pursuit

DALLAS (AP)—Dirk Nowitzki joked after a loss to San Antonio that the Mavericks don't "want to see anyone" in the playoffs, given their recent record against winning teams.

Dallas hasn't beaten any of its likely first-round opponents in more than two months—and that's assuming the Mavericks get in after a 12-year streak of reaching the playoffs ended last season.

At the moment, Dallas is one of four teams in a tight battle for the final three playoff spots in the Western Conference.

And yes, Nowitzki says, the Mavericks need to beat Portland on Friday. Or Oklahoma City when they play twice in a span of nine days. Or the Los Angeles Clippers in a pair of

games a week apart.

"Not necessarily just for confidence but also because we want to stay in the playoff hunt," Nowitzki said. "If we keep losing against the good teams, most of our games left are against teams with winning records. We've got to keep winning at a high clip if we want to make it and so the pressure's on. You gotta love it."

A 112-106 loss to the Spurs on Sunday dropped Dallas to 0-6 against the top five teams in the West since a victory against Houston on Dec. 23.

Since then, the Mavericks have blown big leads at home against the Rockets and Clippers. They've fallen 38 points behind the Trail Blazers, also at home. They haven't been able to get a substantial lead

against the Spurs.

All of which means nothing to coach Rick Carlisle because all he sees is Wednesday night's game at Denver, which has been in free fall because of injuries but finally has point guard Ty Lawson back.

"The analysis of which teams are better ones and all that, I mean, we're going to see them when we see them," Carlisle said. "Right now, we've got to focus on Denver."

After the Nuggets, the Mavericks get the Blazers at home, followed two nights later by East-leading Indiana. The Pacers actually represent the last impressive win for Dallas in the final game before the break.

The victory at Indiana came during a 10-2 stretch for Dallas, but eight of the wins were

against teams with losing records. After four straight wins against sub-.500 teams, the Mavericks had a big lead early against Chicago but let the Bulls pull away in the fourth quarter.

Now Dallas has lost two straight to winning teams. After facing the Nuggets, the Mavericks get three straight winning teams. That happens again when they figure to be battling for a playoff berth in the last three games, including the finale at Memphis, one of the teams in the battle for the final three spots.

"You either rise to the challenge or you don't," Carlisle said. "And right now our mindset is we've got to rise above all challenges, but we've got to do it collectively."

To Carlisle, that means help for Nowitzki, who is the closest he's been to championship form since Dallas beat Miami for the title in 2011.

Monta Ellis, Jose Calderon and Devin Harris give the Mavericks a better backcourt than they did when they missed the playoffs a year ago, and Vince Carter has been a go-to scorer more often as the sixth man after a slow start to the season.

New center Sam Dolembert's production figures strongly in Dallas' chances, and a team that has been defensively challenged at times will lean on Shawn Marion to shore up that area.

"Every game here is huge and we know it," Nowitzki said.

Once-calm witness cries at Pistorius murder trial

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP)—For two days, the witness in the murder trial of Oscar Pistorius kept her composure. Then, just as her testimony was about to finish, she broke down in tears at what she said was the memory of the screams she heard on the night that the double-amputee athlete fatally shot his girlfriend in his South African home.

Michelle Burger, a neighbor of Pistorius who took the stand on the second day of a trial watched around the world, remained calm through intense questioning by the chief defense lawyer. In a final exchange with the lead prosecutor on Tuesday, however, emotion washed over her as she recalled what she described as the terrified screams of a woman early on Valentine's Day last year.

"When I'm in the shower, I relive her shouts," Burger said in an apparent reference to her trauma just after the shooting, when a police captain took her statement. When Gerrie Nel, the prosecutor, asked her about her emotions at the time, she said the experience was "quite raw" and her voice broke. Nel asked her how she was coping now.

"I'm coping fine," Burger insisted. "It's been a year."

Burger, a university lecturer, lives 177 meters (193 yards) from Pistorius' house, where his girlfriend, Reeva Steenkamp, died in what the runner said was an accident.

Burger testified that she heard a man and a woman shouting, then the sound of four gunshots. She said the woman's screams continued during the gunshots and quickly faded away after the final one. She was the first witness called by the prosecution, which contends that Pistorius intentionally killed Steenkamp after a loud argument.

Her testimony contradicts Pistorius' account. He says he



Oscar Pistorius, talks with his attorney, Barry Roux, left, inside court on the second day of his trial at the high court in Pretoria, South Africa, Tuesday, March 4, 2014.

fired four times through the toilet cubicle door, hitting Steenkamp three times in the head, arm and hip or side area after thinking she was a dangerous intruder. He has pleaded not guilty.

The defense contends that Burger may have been asleep when the gunshots were fired, and then mistakenly thought she was hearing gunfire when in fact it was the sound of Pistorius breaking the toilet cubicle door with a cricket bat after realizing he had shot his girlfriend.

During cross-examination of Burger, chief defense lawyer Barry Roux suggested that she was mistaken in saying that she heard a woman screaming and that it was actually Pistorius shouting for help in a high voice after accidentally shoot-

ing Steenkamp.

Giving sometimes grisly details of the killing of the 29-year-old model, Roux said Steenkamp was shot in the head, which would have resulted in brain damage and "no cognitive function" and so she wouldn't have been able to scream just after the last bullet struck, as Burger testified.

Roux said that an expert would later testify in the trial that "with the head shot, she (Steenkamp) would have dropped down immediately."

Burger disagreed. "I heard her voice just after the last shot," she said. "It faded away."

Her husband, Charl Johnson, also testified that "the last scream faded moments after the last gunshot was fired."

Burger also said that the man

she heard - before the sound of the gunfire—was calling for help, a piece of testimony that muddled the prosecution's narrative that Pistorius was the aggressor. Challenged by Roux, Burger speculated that perhaps the voice was that of Pistorius ridiculing Steenkamp's calls for help. "Was it a mockery? I don't know. I'm not Mr. Pistorius," she said.

Pistorius, who faces a minimum of 25 years in prison without parole if convicted of premeditated murder, took notes during testimony and huddled with lawyers during adjournments. His collected demeanor contrasted with his sometimes distraught behavior during a bail hearing last year, when he sobbed in court. At one point on Tuesday he covered his ears, but

it wasn't clear why.

Pistorius, 27, was born without fibula bones because of a congenital defect and his legs were amputated when he was 11 months old. He has run on carbon-fiber blades and was originally banned from competing against able-bodied peers



**L A K E -
L A N D ,
Fla. (AP)**—

Ian Kinsler was expecting this kind of reaction—even if he didn't agree with the way his comments were portrayed.

Kinsler, who was traded from Texas to the Detroit Tigers in the offseason, said Tuesday some critical statements attributed to him in an ESPN The Magazine story were taken out of context. Kinsler was quoted as calling Rangers general manager Jon Daniels a "sleazeball."

"I'm not happy about it. I think that the story was written for drama, and taken a little out of context," the Tigers' new second baseman said. "I understand there were some things directed at the GM, but as far as my teammates and the fans, there's nothing negative to say about that, and I think the quotes taken about the general manager were taken a little out of context."

In the ESPN story, Kinsler blamed Daniels for the departure of Rangers CEO Nolan Ryan, who left the organization in October.

"Daniels is a sleazeball," Kinsler was quoted as saying. "He got in good with the owners and straight pushed Ryan out. He thought all the things he should get credit for, Ryan got credit for. It's just ego."

Kinsler was also quoted as

because many argued that his blades gave him an unfair advantage. He was later cleared to compete. He is a multiple Paralympic medalist but he failed to win a medal at the 2012 London Olympics.

Steenkamp's mother, June, said in a television interview that she did not want to live with bitterness.

"I've lost everything that's important to me, and still, I can forgive. I can forgive," she told NBC's "Today" show. "One must forgive."

June Steenkamp was in court Monday, hoping to look Pistorius in the eye. But, she said, Pistorius "never looked my way, or he didn't have an opportunity to do that."

Judge Thokozile Masipa will ultimately deliver the verdict and decide on any sentence. South Africa has no trial by jury.

Tuesday's proceedings were interrupted when Masipa ordered an investigation into allegations that a South African television channel was broadcasting a photograph of Burger during her testimony—against a court order guaranteeing privacy to witnesses who request it.

"I am warning the media," the judge said, "if you do not behave, you are not going to be treated with soft gloves by this court."

Kinsler says Texas comments taken out of context

saying he hopes the Rangers lose every game this season:

"To be honest with you, I hope they go 0-162."

Kinsler seemed surprised that comment in particular had gotten so much attention.

"That's a matter of telling a joke," he said.

At their spring camp in Surprise, Ariz., the Rangers seemed to take Kinsler's comments in stride.

"We won't go 0-162, guaranteed," manager Ron Washington said.

Third baseman Adrian Beltre said Kinsler is still a friend, and shortstop Elvis Andrus echoed that sentiment.

"He's there and we're here now," Andrus said. "We have to focus on our season. He's still my friend. I don't take anything from that."

Kinsler said when he saw the ESPN story, he knew there would be plenty of talk about it.

Chad Millman, ESPN The Magazine's Editor in Chief, said the magazine stands by the context in which Kinsler's statements were presented. Kinsler, meanwhile, said he doesn't expect to reach out to Daniels any time soon to explain his comments.

"There's no reason to," Kinsler said. "He's a grown man. I think he's intelligent enough and had enough conversations with me to understand where I stand, and that's really it."

Ukrainian team united despite turmoil at home

AYIA NAPA, Cyprus (AP)—With the country in turmoil, Ukraine's national soccer team says it is a symbol of the country's unity.

The Ukrainians are scheduled to face the United States in an exhibition game on Wednesday night in Cyprus, a match moved from Kharkiv to Larnaca for security reasons.

"The national team is a symbol of unity because players come from all over Ukraine," captain Anatoliy Tymoshchuk said Tuesday on a wind-swept practice field behind the team's hotel. "We're all one big family. We're all united."

Tymoshchuk said political troubles at home do weigh on players' minds.

"It's a dangerous situation," he said. "We have our families. We worry, but we hope that we can keep the peace in Ukraine as quickly as possible."

Team spokesman Alexander Glyvynskyy said Wednesday's match is dedicated to the people of Ukraine under the slogan "Peace for Ukraine."

"We are not ready for war," Glyvynskyy said. "We hope that we can be good neighbors (with Russia) in the future."

Despite threats to cancel the match, Football Federation of Ukraine President Anatoliy Konkov said Tuesday the game will go ahead.

"(We) reached a consensus to play the USA, after all," Konkov said in a statement that praised the American team. "(They) stood behind us to protect the national interests and territorial integrity of Ukraine."

The match at Antonis Papadopoulos Stadium is among five remaining warmups for the United States ahead of this year's World Cup. For Ukraine, a 2006 World Cup quarterfinal-

ist and the highest-ranking nation that failed to qualify for the tournament in Brazil, it will serve as preparation for 2016 European Championship qualifying.

U.S. coach Jurgen Klinsmann has a roster filled mostly with players from European clubs, then will use a group heavily from Major League Soccer for an April 2 match against Mexico in Glendale, Ariz.

"This game is a huge opportunity, mainly for our European-based players, for those guys to prove to us that they are eager and hungry to jump on the train to the FIFA World Cup," Klinsmann said.

Ukraine coach Mykhailo Fomenko said he expects Wednesday's game to be similar in style to a Premier League match, since many of the American players play for

English clubs.

Glyvynskyy said he expects the Americans to play an attacking game. Ukraine is injury-free and has all its best players available.

"The players want to play on an official level and want to test their level of play after a two-month winter break," he said.

Antonis Papadopoulos Stadium has hosted many of Cyprus' international matches, but it is not the Mediterranean island's top soccer venue. The GSP Stadium in Nicosia is unavailable because Cyprus is hosting Northern Ireland in another exhibition.

It's the second time in recent weeks Cyprus has been selected as an alternate venue for a match involving a Ukrainian team. Last month, a Europa League match between Dynamo Kiev and Valencia was moved to the Cypriot capital.

Hafa Adai 5K to cap month of races



On Saipan, April means sports. Each and every Saturday this April will have you swimming, biking, running, or just plain moving! On April 5, Saipan will play host to the 13th Annual Xterra Championships. April 12 will see the running of the 25th installment of the TAGAMAN. April 19, Saipan will play host to hundreds of running fanatics who will challenge the Saipan Marathon. And lastly, April 26 will wrap it all up with the Hafa Adai 5K.

Pacific Islands Club Saipan will be teaming up with Let's Move Marianas and the Marianas Visitors Authority to host the first 5-kilometer run of its kind on Saipan.

"We are happy that we are able to support this first time event and we hope that this will not only be good for our local community but also be an added sports tourism attraction for the CNMI,"

said Martin F. Duenas MVA's Community Projects manager. "The Hafa Adai 5K will not be like other event in Saipan. Everyone is invited to come participate in this one of a kind event. The 5K will start and finish at PIC Saipan. This is a fun run which will leave you feeling accomplished and full of color by the time you reach the finish line," said PIC Operations and Event manager Dennis Tababa. "I cannot wait to see the looks on people's faces as they cross the finish line covered in 'holi powder.'"

This 5K will have participants passing through four coloring stations along the 5K route. Volunteers will celebrate each participant's arrival with a splash of either blue-, yellow-, pink-, or red-colored corn starch. This biodegradable and non-toxic mixture will have participants laughing all the way from station to station.

"We wanted to host an event where everyone could join. This is a no-timed everyone wins just by finishing 5K. We want first-timers to come out along with seasoned runners, families and friends," said SEA director Glenn Policare.

Along with PIC Saipan, Let's Move Marianas will be assisting in the production of this event.

"Let's Move Marianas is an initiative to create and sustain a healthy CNMI. We are extremely excited to be collaborating with PIC for this great, unique event!" said Amber Lynn Mendiola.

Mendiola, the Let's Move Marianas Campaign chairperson, said they had a similar idea in mind, but "were happy to see PIC bringing such an event to life. We've been working at this for a while and PIC is the strawberry on top of the fruit salad that's making it happen!"

Entry forms are available at the PIC front Desk. Entry fees are only \$10 and the first 500 paid entries will receive a free limited edition event shirt. Proceeds from the Hafa Adai 5K will go to benefit the CNMI Salvation Army.

For more information, email dennis.tababa@pic-saipan.com or call 237-5147. (PR)

Early bird registration deadline for Saipan Marathon on March 7

This Friday, March 7, is the early bird registration deadline for the 9th Saipan Marathon slated for April 19, 2014.

Early registration for the 50K and marathon is \$55.00 for US and NMI participants, and \$45 for half-marathon and 10K participants.

Early registration must be made by March 7, 2014. An additional late fee of \$10.00 will apply to registrations submitted after March 7. The last day to register for the event will be on March 14, 2013, at 5pm. Registration will include the awards banquet, a finishers T-shirt, and a certificate of completion.

In 2013, over 600 runners joined the event, which includes a marathon, half-marathon, 10K, and 50K courses. The Marianas Visitors Authority has been actively promoting the event in Japan and other countries for several months, and several tour companies have produced special tour packages for the race.

The start will take place at Micro Beach at American Memorial Park at 4:30am for the 50K and the Marathon, at 5:45am for the half-marathon, and at 6am for the 10K.

This year the marathon will implement a cut-off time for both the full marathon and 50K. The cut-off time will be 9am at the halfway point.

All competitors are required to pick up their race packets the AMP Amphitheatre on April 18, 2014, from 4-6pm without exception.

Entry forms are available at the MVA office located in on Beach Road in San Jose or on the MVA official website Event Calendar at www.mymarianas.com. For more information, contact Ed Diaz at the MVA at 664-3210 or through email at ediaz@mymarianas.com. (MVA)

YASKUU

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in the loser's bracket semifinals, 22-20. Billy Hinson led the Gold Diggers and teamed up with fellow Grace Christian Academy students Karlo De Leon, Kenji Yamagata, Rejoice Erbet, and Yui Ho.

Completing the list of participating teams in the U17 division

BRAVES

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final game (against the Jets).

Only one batter from the Braves' top of the order did not reach home in the pivotal top of the sixth, as last year's runner-ups to the Fielders gained three earned runs and five off the Lions' miscues. Second baseman A.J. Evangelista, shortstop Roke Tenorio, and centerfielder Mel Sakisat hit RBI singles, while the Braves got two runs off passed balls and one each off errors from Lions relief pitcher Perry Celis and centerfielder J.J. Chong, and a wild pitch. Before scoring eight runs in the sixth inning, the Braves were

4 COAST

From Page 28

weekend, while Obata notched a 21-15, 21-17 triumph over Marylyn Montano in Class B. Fernandez is also entered in Class B singles and defeated Rowena Sison, 21-10, 21-14.

In the men's singles, three matches were decided in straight games, while the three others went the distance.

A.J. Ortega earned a free

were No Regrets, California Roll, Miley's Beaches, Queen, Team Briana, Mikasa, Exo, Over the Top, and Amasians.

In the U13 contest, Luther Lasagna took only one game to thwart AJ's in the finals, 21-15, and top the 12-team field. Luther Lizama anchored the champion squad, joining forces with Julia Ishikawa, Sun Joon Tenorio, Masaki Kitami, Alex Park, and Andrea Ranjo. Lu-

ther Lasagna was unbeaten in both the pool play and double-elimination playoffs, defeating Knights in the first round, 21-19; Serena and Grants in the quarterfinals, 21-9; and Francois, 21-18, in the battle for the first finals ticket.

Francois, which had Cole Chambers, Logan Mister, Isabel Heras, and Alan Hinson as players, advanced to the winner's bracket semis after prevail-

ing against New Chicks on the Block, 21-2, and AJ's, 21-13. AJ's, which was composed of A.J. Hudkins, Michael Jones, Malika Miyawaki, Matthew Richardson, and Grace Choi, fought back in the loser's bracket, downing the Knights, 21-13, and Serena and the Grants, 22-20, to earn a rematch against Francois and nab the second and last finals seat. AJ's went on to avenge its quarterfinal loss to Francois,

notching a 21-19 win.

Francois settled for the third place honors, while Obsidian Warriors, Thunder Cats, 4 SOS, Big 4 Small, The Warriors, and The Ace missed the podium finish.

The Kids Cup culminated this year's Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival and the 123 players who joined last weekend's competition topped the 2013 record of 120.

only ahead by three, 6-3.

The Lions got the three runs off passed balls in the first and third inning and an RBI single from starting pitcher Ernest Sablan. Their so-so offense in the first four innings pressured the Lions to score at least two runs to extend the game to one more inning and they had a chance, but blew it in the end.

Sablan got into scoring position, as he walked and made it all the way to the third with no outs. However, the Lions were caught with two quick outs, as the Braves fashioned out a double play with Evangelista picking up a shot from third batter Ton Ilo and beating runner Celis before throwing to first baseman Angel Palacios for the second out. The Braves

then stranded Sablan to third and wrapped up the match one inning early after relief pitcher J.J. Lifofoi struck out Jesus Dela Cruz.

In the second game, the Enforcers (3-2) clinched an 11-4 victory over the Fielders (0-5) after six and a half innings.

The Enforcers beat the Fielders in the third and fourth inning exchanges, as the former scored four runs apiece in that span against the combined four of the latter to open a 10-4 lead. The Enforcers earlier gained two runs in the first inning off Cedric Camacho's RBI single and a Fielders boo-boo. Then in the third inning, Darion Jones blasted an RBI double, while Jeff Dela Cruz had a sacrifice fly, while the

Caranto bounced back from an opening game loss to Macoi Aguda, 20-21, prevailing in the last two games, 21-6, 21-12, while Edralin survived Ezekiel Macario, 21-18, 16-21, 21-13. The other three-game duel came in Class B singles with Sang Yu Young outlasting J.P. Nopia, 21-13, 15-21, 21-12.

Complementing last Saturday's roll of singles games were six doubles matches.

In the men's doubles A, Andreau Galvez and Caranto swept Aguda and Aries Cordeiro, 21-18, 21-15, while Sam Jones and Glenn Bluutjens also took only two games to prevail against Jerry Hibi and Chris Hilario, 21-16, 21-12. The other men's doubles tiff (Class C) set for last Saturday was easily won by Montenejo and Cano after a no-show from Panapa Peteru and his partner.

In the women's doubles, two Class B and one Class A matches were won after only two games, while the lone

Class C game was extended to three. In Class A, Jen Savellano and Janelle Pangilinan trounced Lanie Bartolome and Fernandez, 21-10, 21-9, while in Class B, Loyda Ito and Shirley Kim and Cheng Saturno and So Young defeated Cristy Villafior and Lani Santos, 21-18, 21-19, and Sison and Sally Im, 21-11, 21-18, respectively. In Class C, Lazaro and Emily Vargas rallied past Patricia Abantao and Nicole Malasarte, 12-21, 21-20, 21-17.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES				
NBA STANDINGS				
EASTERN CONFERENCE				
Atlantic Division				
	W	L	Pct	GB
Toronto	33	26	.559	—
Brooklyn	29	29	.500	3½
New York	21	40	.344	13
Boston	20	40	.333	13½
Philadelphia	15	46	.246	19
Southeast Division				
Miami	43	15	.741	—
Washington	31	29	.517	13
Charlotte	27	33	.450	17
Atlanta	26	32	.448	17
Orlando	19	43	.306	26
Central Division				
Indiana	46	14	.767	—
Chicago	33	27	.550	13
Detroit	24	36	.400	22
Cleveland	24	38	.387	23
Milwaukee	12	47	.203	33½
WESTERN CONFERENCE				
Southwest Division				
San Antonio	44	16	.733	—
Houston	41	19	.683	3
Dallas	36	25	.590	8½
Memphis	34	25	.576	9½
New Orleans	24	37	.393	20½
Northwest Division				
Oklahoma City	46	15	.754	—
Portland	41	19	.683	4½
Minnesota	30	29	.508	15
Denver	25	34	.424	20
Utah	21	39	.350	24½
Pacific Division				
L.A. Clippers	42	20	.677	—
Golden State	37	24	.607	4½
Phoenix	35	25	.583	6
Sacramento	21	39	.350	20
L.A. Lakers	21	40	.344	20½
BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS				

2014 Marianas Kids Cup

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Participants and organizers of the 2014 Marianas Kids Cup pose for a group photo at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sandcourt.



A young player waits for a signal from the umpire before serving.



A young player serves, while his teammates looks on.



Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association's Mili Saiki joins Luther Lasagna players for a photo during the awarding of first place prizes in the U13 age group.



Players and coach Randy Steele pose for a photo with the Japanese pros.



Dynamite players gather for a group photo after receiving their runner-up medals in the U17 division.



Francois members pose with their medals and certificates after completing the Top 3 in the U13 division.



Players of U13 division runner-up AJ's smile for the camera.



The Gold Diggers players pose with Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association's Mili Saiki, left, after receiving the third place medals in the U17 division.



Warriors hand
Pacers rare home
loss, 98-96
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Saipan Tribune Sports

Once-calm witness
cries at Pistorius
murder trial
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28 THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2014

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Vaskuu, Luther Lasagna triumph



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

From left, coach Mili Saki joins Vaskuu players Tommy Choi, Phalai Frink, Jehn Joyner, Chris Cepeda, and Andrew Johnson for a group photo during the awards ceremony for the 2014 Marianas Kids Cup last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sandcourts.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Vaskuu and Luther Lasagna ruled separate age group competitions in the 2014 Marianas Kids Cup held last Saturday at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand court.

Braves, Enforcers ease past opponents



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

An Enforcers third baseman throws to first during their game against the Fielders in the Senior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball last Sunday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Vaskuu took the U17 age group crown, besting 12 other teams. The champion squad was composed of Phailai Frink, Andrew Johnson, Chris Cepeda, Jehn Joyner, and Tommy Choi, who are all Saipan International School students.

The eventual champion team was undefeated in pool play and clinched the first finals berth

after winning their first three games in the double-elimination playoffs. Vaskuu started the playoffs with a 21-15 win over the fifth-ranked Narnia before beating the Gold Diggers in the quarter-finals, 21-11. A 21-10 triumph over the second-seeded Dyna-



mite moved Vaskuu to the finals and gave the latter the twice-to-beat advantage in the championship round. Vaskuu needed the advantage in its rematch with the Dynamite, as the eventual runner-up stunned its favored foe in Game 1 of the finals, 21-17. Vaskuu

then regrouped in the deciding Game 2, notching a 21-14 triumph to foil Dynamite's upset bid. Dynamite had Angelo Jones, David Ada, Egshiglen Tsatsar, and Quintin Ramsey as members.

Jones and company earned a second crack at Vaskuu after prevailing against Gold Diggers

See VASKUU on Page 26

4 coast to straight wins in women's singles



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tina Lee steps forward for a return to Gigi Zapanta during their women's C singles game in the Sun Palace tournament last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Four players took the short route to victories in the women's singles division matches in the Sun Palace Hotel Singles and Doubles Badminton Competition 2014 last Saturday at the TSL Sports Complex.

Tina Lee was one of them,

as she downed Gigi Zapanta in straight games, 21-17, 21-16, in the women's C singles on Court. Also recording wins after only two games were Nicole Malasarte, Toshiko Obata, and Windy Fernandez.

Malasarte dominated Roxe Lazaro, 21-9, 21-9, in the other women's C singles game last

See 4 COAST on Page 26

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The NSA Braves and JPO Enforcers made short work of their respective foes in the Senior League division of the 2014 Saipan Little League Baseball last Sunday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Braves played in the first game and bagged the victory via 10-run mercy rule, 14-3, against the Lions after only six innings. An eight-run top of the sixth inning allowed the Braves to finish off the Lions one inning early and improve to a 4-1 record for second place behind the unbeaten Red Sox, who held a 4-0 slate pending results of last Sunday's third and

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